PETER FINWICK

JOHN ALLEN HUDSON

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Peter Finwick

By JOHN ALLEN HUDSON

Author of
"The Man and the Moment"

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TO

MY kindest, yet severest critic, my helper for more than a decade, my wife, I lovingly inscribe this volume.

THE AUTHOR.

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By John Allen Hudson

Proem

THE idea of novelizing the modern problems of the preacher and the congregation of the Church of Christ has long been struggling in my mind. Its period of gestation has been attended by great uncertainty as to what the newly born should be. There have been divers premonitions of still-birth. There have been various prognostications as to a brain child that should not be very engaging or inviting. And even now, that the pangs of birth have been experienced and this creation comes to the light of day, dwarfed the progeny may finally come to be regarded, not by others only, but by me as well . . . However, if apologies are necessary they are herein set forth. And if any honor accrue, then let that be given to the Lord and his Church.

One of the great difficulties that has confronted me in undertaking to novelize the problems of the preacher and the congregation of the Church of Christ has been the danger of laying myself open to the charge of taking my own life, or the life of some preacher well known to me and of working under fictitious names to tell the story. As the only way to avoid so grave a danger has come, at last, the thought to take no such character; that is, to create

a character absolutely and then in this proem to tell the public frankly that this is true. Hence the absolute necessity of having it. The characters and places herein suggested to the minds of the readers, as well as the problems presented and the perspective taken of those problems, are wholly imaginary. If therefore they seem to resemble somewhat things with which you are similar it will only serve to teach how similar are our problems and our natures after all.

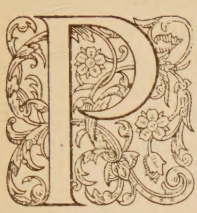
Another difficulty, and a great one, in undertaking to tell such a story and to present the problems incident thereto, has been my conception of the multifarious opinions on all questions of expediencies and policies within the Church. And I have not overlooked the fact that some of the brethren in the larger congregations in some of the larger cities, due to their peculiar experiences and the greater demands placed upon them, have ways of meeting problems, while just as loyal to the Book as others, that are somewhat different from the general experience. In other words, the experiences of different groups have brought about different opinions, and in the following pages there may be such treatment of problems in church life by Peter Finwick as would not meet with your approval. But if you should think his actions out of line, just remember that he is not a real character.

There is an intended moral to this tale. It is hoped that, by taking the different natures and placing them side by side, as Peter Finwick had to do, a lesson of tolerance may be taught. And truly, in matters of opinion in the Church of Christ, there is not a little need of the spirit of forebearance.

John Allen Hudson.

Washington, D. C.,
April 1, 1928.

CHAPTER I



ETER FINWICK belonged to a new era. That is to say, he belonged to the post-restoration period. Many new things had come to confront the Church of Christ. The age of crystallization had set in, following the formative period in which there was great agitation on many points. But out of this chaotic, indefinite state there had evolved at last an organization and a policy. And woe to him that should become a heretic in the post-restoration period! Peter was to find in the hard school of experience the necessity of adapting himself to that organization and to that policy.

In Peter Finwick's day the so-called "pastor system" was fastening itself upon many, many churches. The pangs of growth were in this measure, as well as in many others. There were underlying causes for this. The pioneering days of the "traveling evangelist" were being more and more relegated because of two things. First, a more numerous membership and stronger local organizations. Second, a more numerous, younger ministry. A more extensive traveling evangelism would have continued on through Peter's day had there remained but a few preachers and many congregations to reach.

These were inevitable conclusions bound up in the seeds of restoration. While there was more or less disputing and shouts of "Unsound, unsound!" these substantial causes were such that mere cavil would not stop them. Either younger congregations would have to spring up faster than preachers could be de-

veloped to supply them, or else the inexorable law of cause and effect would develop the system.

Local congregations developed sufficient strength to supply the needs of a single preacher, for all his time, and there was a sufficient production of material for the ministry to insure to the most of the stronger congregations a well trained ministry.

Of course such a transition had to be attended by much discussion of the new condition by the passing generation of preachers, if it did not come to amount to debating between the older generation and the newer, of which Peter Finwick was one. The newer generation did not feel disposed to fight the pioneers for there was a consciousness that, as the apostle said, "I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereupon, but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon." So the older preachers laid the foundation, and they laid it well.

Suffice it to say that Peter Finwick found in the churches the same doctrine and the same practice that had prevailed, indeed, that had been set up by the pioneer preachers, in accordance with the authority of the Scriptures.

The differences that seemed to exist were not significant. But to some, they certainly seemed so, and among them there was none of more importance than the operation of the ministry. And that difference was bound up in the law of cause and effect. The older generation was unwittingly responsible for the condition that arose by virtue of the very fact that it made things easier and stronger for the rising generation.

And another powerful cause in creating the system was the inadequate remuneration, or pay, for services rendered by the preachers who secured only

Sunday appointments from time to time. The preachers learned from the hard school of experience of the meager "liberality" of the saints when the offering was only free-will and when services were not contracted for. Of course, some also fought the idea of the preacher setting a financial figure for his sermons. It was contended by such reactionaries that the church alone should have such privilege. The preacher's rights were considerably restricted in the earlier part of the restoration, owing to the fact that there had been a tremendous attack upon the assumptions of the clergy by the leaders in the restoration.

Peter Finwick began his ministry in the midst of this transition and under these influences. His was a troublous time. But he inherited no antipathies. Nor did any of the discussion that he heard determine him to ignore the place and office of the ministry. But he early understood, in the very nature of things, that he should follow the ministry by preaching in a settled sense for one congregation for a few years, and then for another. He could see on every hand that that was the thing that was prevailing, and that had to prevail. He did not close his eyes to this fact. He was too apt a student for that.

Still warnings went up. But while they went up, the congregations were making progress. Colleges were being built and maintained, not as a part of the churches, it is true, but the field of education was no little factor in the growth of the church. Such had been true from the time of Bacon College in Kentucky, and of Bethany College in Virginia. There was the great field of religious journalism, rich with possibilities which were being exploited not always to the best interests of the restoration movement. Some were using them to preach theories that disturbed the peace of the churches. Orphanages were being

erected, and even some of the stronger congregations in the larger cities had adopted the program of hospitalization, building clinics, nurseries, charity lodging houses for the poor, et cetera. Of course, this turn of affairs and this broadening of the work of the churches met with another lot of criticism. But progress is inevitable and mere clamor will not stop it.

Peter Finwick saw these changes and advances, and was glad. It did not strike him as being inconsistent with the spirit and genius of Christianity, as practiced in the apostolic age, to minister to the needy and afflicted. And to put such a work on a systematic basis, under the control of the local churches, through their elderships, did not occur to him to be unscriptural. However, there was a sectionalism in the church at large of which Peter was to learn with some disappointment.

Peter was Irish (whatever his name may suggest to the contrary notwithstanding), and he was a Southerner. He had the native wit of the Irish, and the irritability and the willingness to fight—morally and spiritually—since it was incompatible with his calling for him to fight otherwise—that is supposed to appertain to the Irish. And he had that warmth of blood that is characteristic of the sons of the old South.

In the ministry Peter was a "maverick," or stray. He ran in a class all to himself. In life he was to have but few deep personal friends. He held every man at a distance. While he was social, he was also aloof. The inner chamber of his consciousness he would share with but a very few, and then with the greatest of reluctance. He grew up as an independent. He was not specially beholden to any class, nor aligned, through personal contact with those whom he loved, to any issue, because of such friendship.

Issues he regarded in their merit alone. When rebaptism, special divine providence, the college question, the indwelling of the spirit and sectionalism everywhere pressed for attention he studied them with a cold independence.

Peter did not fall inadvertently into his life work. It was not a "happen so" with him, as with Saul, who went to find his father's asses and found a kingdom instead. It was the result of a deliberate choice.

Why did he choose the ministry of the word? He was a normal young man of ability and ambition. He arrived at that time in life when a choice had to be made. There were the more hopeful professions so far as money and position were concerned. But Peter Finwick studied the question more thoroughly than with just the view that took into account money and position. He considered his work along more unselfish lines. This would not have been true if he had contemplated his future from the standpoint of dollars and cents, or in the renown that fickle fortune will give to the devotees of earthly glory.

One then could not think that Peter Finwick did not have ambition because he entered the ministry. And he came to believe, after some little reflection along that line, that the ministry contained by far the ablest body of men in public life, and that they exerted a more lasting influence upon society in general than any other aggregation of men. Here then was a work which would tax the greatest powers, and that would be a means of exerting a lasting influence.

He entered the ministry then, not because of a monk's cowl, or a clergyman's haughty mien, but because it would afford or necessitate that studious life which makes the ministry one of the most gifted and

erudite of any of the vocations.

A regard for the work of breaking the word of life had been instilled into him from the earliest days. His mother had been constantly about it. And his father was a religious man. These things were a tremendous influence in the final choice as to what his life work should be.

In addition, and perhaps partly as a result of the above things, he felt a sense of duty. But he entertained no illusions, nor did he court them. He did not expect God to speak to him from the sky, telling him to preach the word. That sense of duty, which is an inarticulate call kindled as a fire in the bones, drove him. It allowed him an opportunity to discipline his large ambition, and to use his right of choice, his free moral agency. But he felt, nevertheless, as did Saul of Tarsus, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" What stronger call than this—not instantaneous and perhaps later to be doubted, but constant, ever increasing—can any man want?

Peter Finwick had "family." Not the sort of a family that forms a burden by virture of its very position, and dictates what each successive generation shall do. His action was not trammeled by this sort of genealogic tree. But he was blessed with good, comparatively pure blood. Great men, men of renown there had been none in the immediate family, but there were lawyers, doctors, planters, bankers and teachers, and so on, sprinkled all about him.

His piety came largely from his mother. It was she who seemingly dedicated him to the ministry from birth, for she did yearn, in his natal state, that he might preach the word. And she was always zealous and spiritual. Like the young preacher Timothy

of old, he could say much for his mother. About her knee he had been trained and taught to regard holy things with a due reverence. Such mothers as he had make useful men. Such mothers can solve, as no others can, the problem of the dearth of preachers.

Strangely, it might seem, there were no preachers for two previous generations in Peter's family. But that oddity in heredity that makes one more to resemble his grand-father, or great grand-sire even than his immediate predecessor, had played a prank on Peter, for his forebears back a few generations had been preachers. To them he reverted, mayhap. At any rate, he was destined for the ministry. And he was to have a very different conception of the message that he was to deliver from what his forebears who exhorted the faithful had had. He was to bow before the will of no man, nor honor the mandates of any save Jesus of Nazareth, whereas his forefathers who had preached had been found up in the creeds of men.

There were three girls and two boys in the Finwick family, Peter being the youngest. The other boy, who likewise received a Bible name, Titus, took for his line in life the practice of medicine.

The girls, who are not due to figure very largely in this account, were modest, refined Christian women who married duly, and respectably, and settled down. They will perhaps touch this narrative at points, but for the present they may be passed.

Peter's father was a dreamer and a plunger who had made and lost several nice fortunes. At the time this story opens he had settled down to a solid course which he bade fair to continue. He was in the lumber business, being one of the most active men in Stivers Hardwood Lumber Company. He had followed the lumber business independently for a number of years.

However, the elder Mr. Stivers offered him a salary of fifteen thousand dollars a year, whereupon Joseph Wintmore Finwick moved to the beautiful and prosperous city of Balmoreck that boasted a population of upward of one hundred thousand.

The boys never really lacked an opportunity to get an education. While their father had changed lines a few times and had jeopardized himself financially, he was never so pressed that he could not give his children what they needed. In this they were fortunate.

In personal appearance Peter was of medium height and average weight. He had blue eyes, almost a gray. They were cold eyes. Independence shone in them. And yet the impenetrable blueness of them suggested a depth of soul, a firmness of purpose and an integrity of heart that made them not so cold after all, for in them there was an assurance of justice and a compassion for the misfortunes of the race. When Christianity had flavored his heart, adding the divine compassion of the meek and lowly Nazarene, something akin to tenderness was left to linger in his eyes. But, for all that, there was the glint of steel in their blue-grey depth. His features were even and well formed. His chin was firm without being pugnacious. His jaws were full and positive. His forehead was compact, not excessively intellectual, nor so prominent as to suggest an impractical dreamer. The very compactness, symmetry and rotundity of his head articulated, so to say, his extraordinary practicability. Indeed, that was his outstanding characteristic. His nose was almost straight. Eyes wide apart. Lips neither too full nor too thin. Features classic. Hair a light brown.

Peter did not go in for classic honors. Perhaps that was because he was not given over to the intellectual.

He was not the sort who could bury himself in books while out yonder the poor of the world were starving for the bread of life. But he did have a ready mind, and he made the most of advantages. So he prepared himself. He knew that a preacher could not know too much. But he was not the sort of man who could pursue classic honors and gradually grow away from the world. He was a dynamic sort of fellow whose sphere was to be that of action.

He had "balance." He was practical. And he was a close student of human nature, which stands a preacher as well in hand as does the study of the message he has to deliver, in some respects. Indeed, Peter was fascinated with the doings of the family of man. Of all the things he studied he thought man the most interesting.

CHAPTER II.

Peter's First Call

The town of Goodnow was an old town. It was almost as large in the Civil War days as in the latter part of the second decade of the twentieth century. It had its Main Street, along which were located its principal business houses. And it had its "atmosphere," created by its undulating soil and its winding ravines, its trees and its churches.

The Church of Christ in Goodnow, which numbered less than one hundred members, was as complex as the citizenship of the town itself. And it had not a preacher. Formerly it had had a preacher who came over and preached one Sunday in each month. This had been the best that was possible at that time. But certain forward-looking members of the congregation, moved somewhat, it must be confessed, by what the religious neighbors were doing, decided upon straining a point and getting a preacher to locate among them.

This first decision was no sooner tentatively reached than the thought began to expand. Complications grew out of the first reflection. Upon some slight discussion, the congregational perspective became quite confused and nebulous. Brother So-and-So wanted an old preacher who lived over in an adjoining county. This old brother had a large family, mostly small children, when it would have seemed that they would have been more in place as grandchildren. He had neglected to marry early in life, and perhaps could not because of limited pecuniary blessings, and so late in life he had married a slovenly sort of woman who was blessed with the power to help her husband to

reproduce, whether they were able to provide properly for their children and to educate them or not. Old Brother Shackleton had some splendid powers as a preacher. He was essentially a one book man. He knew the Scriptures very well indeed. But not having acquired a proper education otherwise, his language was poor. There was also a general uncouthness about him that made him uninviting to certain of the more polished members of the Goodnow church. These turned up their noses at Brother Shackleton and would have none of him. Brother So-and-So had known Brother Shackleton before, and having learned to appreciate the spirituality of the man, and his fine scriptural knowledge (being himself uneducated, he was not at all fastidious about the language of the preacher), seeing his good offices spurned and his friend insulted, straightway became deeply offended and stayed away from church for some time thereafter.

Brother Winner, who lived in a good little city in a neighboring state, would be a very desirable man for the Goodnow church, some of the leaders decided, but it was evident that Brother Winner would not consider the place. He was with a better church in a larger town. And he was drawing a better salary than the Goodnow church could afford to pay. Brother Winner was a smooth man. His manners were refined, his speech was polished and his bearing always genteel. But Brother Winner was destined to go on up, as men of this type would inevitably, unless some misstep should send him to the bottom, or some breath of scandal should touch him. Hence the Goodnow church had not a chance for the man it thought it ought to have—that is, whom its leaders thought it should have. The men it could get, some would not have, and the men it ought to have, it could not get.

It was learned by a member of the Goodnow church who had been over in the city of Balmoreck, which was situated upon the Fourth Chickasaw Bluff, that there was a young man prepared for the ministry who was just out of college, and who desired a place to preach the Gospel of Christ. He recommended that this young man be considered. He had heard him make only a prayer-meeting talk, but it was fine, he avowed, and he was swept off his feet by the eloquence of the young preacher.

But this brought on more discussion. A lot of things would have to be known about any preacher who should be called to the Goodnow church. Perhaps there is not any class of men who must pass so rigid an examination before being admitted to their work as preachers. A preacher must pass muster on his morals, his private life, his family life, his manners, his speech, his fluency, his knowledge of the Bible, his ability to make pretty little speeches at all civic meetings, and so on ad infinitum. He must pass a thorough examination on his dress, his neatness. It is true that he is not to be paid for all these things. He will usually receive a smaller salary than other professional men about him. These rather severe handicaps are enough to intimidate all but the bravest.

The question arose whether this young preacher was married. It was stated that he probably was not, it was thought that he was not, at least; then it was thought advisable to write him a letter and to tell him that Goodnow church was considering him, and it would like to know certain things about him. Was he married? Some of the members of the Goodnow church thought they ought to have a married man. What were his educational attainments? What work had he done before? Likewise some of the leaders

of the church were convinced that they needed an experienced man.

Peter wrote a rather sarcastic reply. Expressed pleasure at being considered for the Goodnow church. He was pleased to know that they felt themselves entitled to the best. He did not know whether he could pass so drastic an examination as they would set, however. He would also have some requirements to make, and some inquiries to address to them. Did they have any hypocrites in the church? Any members who would not pay their debts? Any who had been guilty of drunkenness or adultery? What was the general reputation of the church in the town? While he was perfectly willing to give his life to help save the lost, he was anxious to know his field of labor; and, if a church in any locality should be a hindrance and not a help, it would be better, perhaps, to go to the world alone.

He was not married. He would like to have more reasons than professional alone when he should marry. However, he was certainly no misanthrope, and he was not a misogynist. He had a very high regard for the gentle sex.

His letter stung so that he was shelved, but his name was not taken out of the list of those to be considered.

It so happened that in a short time Peter was called to a nearby point for a "meeting." He did so well, for a lad, that the church at Goodnow became very eager to engage him. After canvassing the whole situation and discussing the monetary side of the engagement, Peter assured them that after he had filled some other appointments for protracted meetings he would come to them in the fall and remain with them until the following summer.

When Peter came in the fall a place for him to stay was already arranged. It was agreed that an elderly couple in the church, who had no children, should keep the young preacher. Such precaution would doubtless be well, the leaders of the congregation thought. Probably such precaution would not have been taken if he had come to teach school, but since he was coming to preach the Gospel, it was thought best to safeguard Peter—or all others from him. He did not regard himself as being dangerous to the chastity of the wives and daughters of the congregation, but he uttered no protest. Thus he was early an apprentice to that rigorous dame, Propriety. Also, he was to be generously removed from the equally to be dreaded Dame Rumor, and her worse particeps, Dame Scandal. The young, unmarried preacher began to take up his cross.

CHAPTER III.

It was a beautiful day. The leaves of autumn had not yet begun to fall. But they were tinted gorgeously, a perfect riot of colors. The late October calm, of maturity, after the zest and verve of former seasons, comparable to the peacefulness of full age in a man who has gone beyond the passions and ambitions of youth, settled over the earth. The haze of that period was over the world, now rich in its fruitage, in the long autumnal days known as Indian Summer. The sun seemed to shine upon the glorious scenes with that gentleness with which his rays fall through a cathedral window, abated, serene.

"What a glorious world it is!" Peter Finwick thought, as he walked along the principal street, Main Street, of Goodnow. His step was elastic. He was happy, satisfied with the world.

Goodnow boasted some two thousand people. It was a county-seat town. It had its polyglot population—the senile, the struggling, the indolent, the well-to-do, the bankers, the lawyers, the dentists and so on. However, Peter had seen but a few of the folk. He had been in town only a week. The most of the people he had seen were members of the Church of Christ. He had preached two sermons and attended prayer meeting in the middle of the week. He had been greeted by two good audiences.

While he was unaware of it, in part, a number of the young ladies of the town, those who were members of the Church of Christ and those who were members of denominational churches, had already interested themselves in him. (Many of the fairer sex have an interest in eligible males, although, theoretic-

ally, the interest of the man is supposed to send him off upon the search, in pursuit of the ineffable physical complements!) As he walked down the street there was a slight flutter of a number of window curtains. And not only the girls were so uncircumspect as to peep. Some of the older folk did too. A new preacher in such a town as Goodnow was calculated to stir the community a bit. A young, good-looking, unmarried preacher would be the subject of much comment and conjecture, of many surmises.

There was in the town and a member of the Church of Christ a sweet blond maiden who was completely "bowled over" by Peter from the very first. She was madly in love with him before a week had passed. She was so obviously affected by him that, following the human streak, he was repelled by her display of affection. Of course, she was coy, restrained, but just the same "It" (with apology to a well-known author) showed.

But Esther Watts was a lovely girl. Her mother was anemic, in constant ill health, and it was thought she had tuberculosis. But the family vigorously denied that there was a possibility of the mother's being so affected. They were strangely secretive and sensitive on that score. Esther's father was a radical on the Sunday school question. He thought it was blasphemous, almost the unpardonable sin, for classes to be segregated from the main body and taught a lesson in the Bible. He hunted diligently for some slight connection in the Scriptures that he might press or "wrest" it to fit his needs, and with and through it to attack the teaching of the Bible in classes. He made most frequent use of the Apostle Paul's statement in the Corinthian letter about confusion. And he argued that such segregation into classes was confusing, and therefore violative of the Scriptures.

Peter met Miss Esther as he went down town. With hesitancy she greeted him. He was in somewhat of a bustling mood, and did not care to stop. But she stopped, and he felt that he had to, out of courtesy. But he very nearly passed on at that.

Of course he would not be so impolite as to pretend that he did not know her. So he spoke and shook hands with her as he gently raised his hat.

"How are you liking our town by now, Brother Finwick?" she inquired.

"It's great!" he said.

And then followed some inconsequential talk. But before he broke away she insisted that he would visit her mother soon. She explained that her mother was not at all well, and that he had not met her, for she had not been able to attend church services.

"Now be sure to come right away, for Mother will be looking for you," she said as they left one another.

"You may look for me before long," he assured her over his shoulder as he strode away.

Not only did Peter meet the daughter, but down at the post office whither he went to get his mail, he met the father. When the mail trains came in one could go to the post office and meet almost anyone who lived in Goodnow. The arrival of the mail was no small matter. Where not many other things were exciting, this was one of the outstanding features of the day.

Brother Oliver Watts was elderly. He wore mustache which he allowed to straggle to its full length. He did not twist or crop it. He would never have dreamed of that. It was somewhat troublesome at times, and when he would drink he would be under the necessity of poking the ends in his mouth and

sucking the water out thereafter. And this made a peculiar noise. He did not chew tobacco, but he did smoke a long-stemmed pipe. And he smoked much. He was narrow through the temples, had a straight, sharp nose, thin lips, and was narrow between the eyes. He was easily inflamed if he were pressed in an argument. And he was often to be found in an argument. But those who knew him best had long since decided that he was unreasonable and they avoided crossing swords with him.

After getting his mail, Peter and Brother Oliver Watts strolled up the street together. They stopped in front of a grocery store managed by one of the brethren. Out next to the curbing was a strong, thick board which was fastened between two posts so that it made a seat. It had been whittled on by many, who for lack of something more interesting, had whiled away the time. What tales that old board could have told could it have talked! It had been notched and worn slick. Upon this board Peter and Oliver Watts took a seat. They were no more than seated when Brother Watts reached for his pouch of Granger twist tobacco and his pipe. His breath and his pipe were both strong. He filled his pipe methodically, thoughtfully, perfectly, as he had many hundreds of times, by inserting the bowl of the pipe in the mouth of the pouch. Then he pressed the tobacco down well and lighted it. As the curls of tobacco rose under the heat, he pressed them down solidly with a pat of his right forefinger. Between puffs he started on the Sunday school question.

"Brother Finwick, there's one thing a-goin' on here I want you to stop the very fust thing. They's too much confusion a-goin' on in this church. It's just a hub-bub and a pow-wow when they come together. A number of separate classes is started, they

all get to goin' at once, and you can't hear your ears, hardly. That ought to be stopped."

Peter was innocent of evil intentions. He loved peace. But he was not afraid of an argument.

"Do the elders say there is confusion?" Peter inquired dubiously.

"Of course they don't say so. But they is confusion just the same."

"Do the most of the members say that there is confusion? Does the majority of them want this matter of teaching in classes stopped?" Peter further inquired.

"Of course not. I tell them they are violatin' the Scriptures, but what's that to them? But just the same you'll never make headway here and unite these folks into a solid family until you get away from this confusion. You can't get the co-operation of all these folks at all until this here confusion is done stopped."

The sinister insinuation that there was a division lurking in the congregation, and that he would not succeed over the opposition of Brother Oliver Watts, and another indefinite number marching under the term "they," Peter overlooked. But he asked another question:

"How many are there who oppose the present method of teaching the Bible, Brother Watts?"

"Well, I guess they's not very many who come right out on the question, but a good many of them know it is confusin'."

"I know we must not have confusion in the church, and it's not good to have confusion in the church house, even before the church comes together for regular worship and service, which the Bible study is not, Brother Watts, but what you say is confusing a great number might say is not confusing. Who

knows? Am I to take your word and refuse the word of a greater number of people?"

"Well, it's confusing just the same, and I don't care what anybody else has to say about it. I can tell what I hear with my own ears, and I know 'tis confusing," Oliver Watts answered doggedly, and slightly flushed with anger.

It was a wonder that he had not flared up and accussed Peter of disputing his word, but he had not known him quite long enough yet.

He wanted to begin upon another part of the subject, but Peter preferred to slip away from a public argument, for a crowd had gathered, ready to hear what would be said. Peter thought it impolite to engage in an argument with one of the brethren on the street, and he knew by a study of Brother Watts that such an argument might degenerate to a brawl, if he did not give place to the doggedness and anger of Brother Watts.

Another person knew the same thing. Jeremy Jones was a good, reasonable, solid member of the Church of Christ, and so he came along and drew Peter away by telling him that Brother Metcalf, down at the bank, said for him to come down there.

But Peter then and there made up his mind to a certain thing. He would invade the sacred confines of Brother Watts' home, start an argument on the Sunday school question and warn Brother Watts on the subject until he would not be going round with a chip on his shoulder seeking to stir up an argument on the street to the detriment and hurt of the church. Already, he was aware, there was too little regard for the church because of the so-called narrow-mindedness of some of the brethren. Just between them, Peter meant to have it out. He was convinced that that would have to be done. It usually had to be done

with any preacher of the Church of Christ who came that way, whether for a longer or a shorter time.

Not another week had gone by until Peter went to perform his self-appointed, but necessary task. Brother Watts got very angry. Peter did not handle him with gloves. And yet he did not lose control of himself. Brother Watts seemed on the verge of showing the new preacher the door a time or two. But Peter was not deterred. At last the inevitable conclusion was reached. If Brother Watts was not ready to concede the argument, at least he was ready to concede that Peter's viewpoint was hopelessly in error, that nothing could change him.

"You are just like the rest of them. You are blind. You can't see, simply because you don't want to," Brother Watts concluded.

"Had it ever occurred to you that possibly I see and that you are the one who is blind in this case? It is kind of like it is with a drunk man. He considers everybody else drunk but himself. And hasn't it also occurred to you that the majority opinion, where it cannot be anything but an opinion—since the Bible has not said HOW to teach—but only to teach —should be taken by the minority? Or shall the minority never yield? In that case any church must be in a perpetual state of war. Is not such a spirit on the part of the minority simply insurbordination? This spirit of insubordination God will punish, as in the case of Dathan and Abiram when they withstood Moses in the Wildnerness."

"I don't never yield the point," Brother Watts said. "But I don't push this thing to the division of the church."

"You hinted to me on the street the other day that this church will divide unless your point is conceded," Peter reminded him.

"Now, you misunderstood me," Brother Watts said, and thereafter the argument dwindled away. It was concluded. But Peter had left a sting in his brother's heart. Henceforth Brother Watts was to be almost sullen with Peter. This studied coldness, however, made no impression. Peter ignored it. But he knew well enough that if Brother Watts ever got the opportunity he would make him and the church trouble. He felt that Brother Watts would be glad to join in any move that might be directed against the preacher. He was only looking for the chance from that day forth to get rid of the preacher.

Such is the club of so many disgruntled brethren. If they cannot run the preacher, if he dares have a personality and a conviction, rebels that they are, they then want to run him off. And they rarely have the courage to say so. They are supreme hypocrites. They work behind his back and stir up a discontent. In Peter's subconsciousness was a knowledge of this method and its effectiveness, and the ever-present danger that it might be used. But he did not very much care. When the thought occurred to him as he walked away from Brother Watts' house he merely shrugged his shoulders and disregarded it. He thought the world was large enough for him to get along. He was not literally tied to one spot.

It pained poor Esther deeply for her father to take such a strong stand against the new preacher. She was ready to concede the loss of every point by her father, if she had been asked to speak her mind. How she did admire Peter's piercing logic—if a girl in her frame of mind could consider logic. Perhaps it was not logic. But how she did admire Peter! And how puny she did think her father.

On the day of the argument when Peter left she gently rebuked her father for his anger at times

during the argument. She called his attention to the fact that Peter had never lost control of himself, and had always been kind, while oftentimes positive. And she gained her mother over on her side, and that dame, long an invalid, ruled the place with a rod of iron.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Oliver. You acted like a spoiled child, just like Esther said. And because she dared to tell you of it you have stormed at her until you have her in tears. You ought to apologize to her and then go and hunt up Brother Finwick and apologize to him," Mrs. Watts said.

"You are both on his side, are you?" he asked and got up and stamped peremptorily from the house.

But Brother Watts was "cured" as far as Peter Finwick was concerned.

CHAPTER IV.

One of the leading families of the town of Goodnow was the Corbyn family. Mr. Corbyn, whose given names were Elias Poston, which were regularly in the family on either side, came to be the leading man of the family. The family fortune and honor were still on the ascending plane in him. While his ancestors could not go back to the Mayflower (if as many had come over in that vessel as have been reported it would have had a tonnage equal to the present United States Navy!) it ran through six successive generations and finally was rooted in New England. The Corbyns had good blood—and were proud of it. And in a town the size of Goodnow, good blood was a very fine thing. It counted more than in cities. Everything, even blood, is accentuated in a town of two thousand people. The elements of such a town are more distinct. There the village scapegrace is more disreputable, the liar is more dishonorable, the moron is more indecent than in a city. Perhaps the reason for this is that each specimen is singled out, and is often broiled over the glowing coals of town gossip. And on the same basis, and for exactly the same reasons, the honorable families are more aloof than in cities. If one of mediocre standing is warmly saluted by one who is known as a "leading citizen," that one is on the road to being "accepted." And as he progresses he must, perforce, show the same fine distinction of "high-hatting" as is practiced by his more worthy fellow-citizens. Of all the hot-beds of make-believe and social consciousness, unfair distinctions and lines of demarcation, currents and cross-currents, one may expect to find them in such a town as Goodnow.

But, of course, there are those who are enabled, by a high sense of right, to live above such sordidness. The meaner, more uncouth spirits of such a town, of which there are hundreds and of which spirits there are thousands, are oftentimes more conscious of their poverty, or lack of social honor, than are their social superiors. The "inferiority complex," from whatever angle, is at the bottom of town gossip and back-biting. In such a case the lordly ones are made to come down a bit, in the way of looking of those who have an inferiority complex.

Concerning the cross-currents that existed in Goodnow, Peter Finwick was blissfully ignorant. And by nature he was such that he would, even knowing, be largely uninterested in such cross-currents. He had not been reared in such thoughts, had not been put to school to them, and he was largely untouched by them. But ultimately, however contrary to his nature and training, he would have to take cognizance of some of the "passions of the souls" of some of the citizens of Goodnow. But, of course, this would be in following, and not in departing from, his line of duty.

Returning to Mr. Elias P. Corbyn and family. Mr. Corbyn was the leading banker of the town, and had vast real estate holdings besides. He was one of the wealthiest men of the county. Certainly he was regarded highly, for he was cleanly robust in both the family fortune and the family honor. Had he grown any larger, he would soon have found Goodnow too small for his increased abilities. Goodnow had all it could do to hold him, and still he was in no sense of the word a snobbish sort of person. If his ambition has been just a bit larger though, he would have left Goodnow for some city, where he should have had a chance of exercising to the full his quite

large ambition. The plain truth was that his many business interests sapped his ambition for greater things. He did not find the courage to break away, although his ambition was great. The time to have broken away had long since past. He might have done it in his earlier days before his fortune had increased and his many connections had formed so many unbreakable ties. Since that time had long since passed when he might have broken away, he came at last to be largely contented. (Such a term as contentment should be spoken of relatively, for but few mortals are entirely satisfied with their connections in life and are supremely happy.) He had come to be one of the leading citizens of the community. And perhaps in that capacity he best served humanity. At least he so thought. And while this was an afterthought, consolatory in nature, it helped to settle him into the contentment he felt. But he could not be bound to Goodnow all the year. He and his family—consisting of only his wife and daughter—often took trips to distant and glamorous places. Florida in the winter. Sometimes Maine in the summer. And New York City in the show season. And so he and his little family were stocked with the latest and most polite gossip and social interests.

When Peter accepted a call to the Church of Christ in Goodnow, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elias P. Corbyn was away at a female college in Maryland. No, she had not selected, or tried for Smith, Wellesley, or Bryn Mawr. She had made a deliberate selection of Goucher College in Baltimore. It had appealed to her. Perhaps the glowing features of this particular college as set forth in the artistic literature sent her had been responsible for the decision. She did not know any particular friends who had influenced her. Thither she had gone in

the fall. Only the year before she had graduated from high school in Goodnow. And now she was to be "broadened" in such a way as to reflect upon her family and to accentuate her station in life.

One or two other girls in Goodnow had managed to go away to college, but none had gone very far away. Miss Eloise Corbyn had been able to plume her pinions for a more distant and more engaging spot (distance lends enchantment to so many eyes) than any of them. And so away to Goucher College, with its glamour and its glow, she had gone before Peter Finwick had arrived in Goodnow.

Miss Eloise Corbyn could almost shame Juno, divine Juno, or the famous Venus de Milo. She was a decided brunette with a languorous pair of brown eyes, that, as Shakespeare said, had been formed because two stars had entreated to come and be those eyes. And those same languorous brown eyes had put many male hearts, and were destined to put more, to a decided commotion. Five feet and five inches tall, she weighed one hundred and thirty pounds. Her height, weight, grace and symmetry—her undeniable beauty, which resulted from the combination of all these, plus her beautiful character—were calculated to make her noticeable in any gathering. Even those delicate little mannerisms of which she was gloriously unconscious, for she was not sophisticated, were so artlessly artistic as to bespeak a pleasant personality. But her beauty and grace of soul, forming that intangible and inexplicable force that mortals call character, was the greatest attraction she had. However, one is not to think she was perfect. Those who knew her intimately also knew of those little incongruities and eccentricities that made her human. She was as delightfully, and sometimes as aggravatingly, human as one could wish. In her case, as in others innumer-

able, character was intertwined with her features. Sometimes a beautiful character can make a person beautiful whose features are rather homely and whose movements are somewhat restricted. But twice blessed that person whose grace is both spiritual and physical, or whose character and whose delightful curves of body and grace of movement are united in one formation, as in the case of Eloise Corbyn.

Miss Eloise Corbyn's endowments, superabundant, made her a child of fortune. She did not, as none can, choose her parents. But this vast scheme of things had been kind to her. However, blessings such as she had could not elevate her above this mundane sphere which all mortals, whether favored or unfavored, fortunate or unfortunate, rich or otherwise, must experience. What infinite gradations! What incalculable differences in this vast scale! Yet,

"A man's a man for a' that,"

and a woman's a woman. And so Eloise had her hopes and her fears, her likes and her antipathies.

Mr. Elias P. Corbyn was a Methodist. He was proud of his religion. But he was not the sort who swam in a perfect sea of emotionalism, as many have from the incipiency of American revivalism, instituted by the Wesleys, Coke, Asbury, George Whitefield, and others, and which continues into our day under such leaders as Billy Sunday and Amie Semple McPherson. While his religion had been largely associated with such emotionalism and had inherited the qualities from the above mentioned sources, Mr. Corbyn was not the kind to lose completely his dignity in a low sort of animalism, even if it should seek the guise of "religious experience." He was a polite, dignified leader in the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church was proud of him. It showed it.

Mr. Corbyn knew it. No large measure was entered upon by the church of which he was a member unless he was first consulted. Such importance was not to be ignored—by the Methodist Church.

Mr. Corbyn's vanity was quite often gratified, but he did not lose himself.

Peter Finwick could not hope to establish any amicable relation upon a religious basis with the Corbyns. And he was generally so oblivious to their existence that it mattered not. But they were to play a part in this life and he in theirs.

There was a degree of contumely and odium attached to the Church of Christ in Goodnow, for the reason that the Church of Christ could not and would not tolerate the lax religious standards of the denominational churches. And it had always held extremely aloof from all their endeavors. Of course, they were inclined to make considerable fuss and racket over their religious affairs.

The Reverend Ellis Mobley was pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (of Jesus Christ). There was no Northern Methodist Church in the town. The Baptist pastor was the Reverend Solomon (why he was given that name none could tell) Gunn. Reverend Mr. Gunn courted popularity quite as ardently but not quite as effectively as Reverend Mr. Mobley. The latter had certain connections that put him head and shoulders above his Baptist rival. The chief of which was that he had a better church house ('tis strange what values have come to attach to the very remote strains of Christianity which one so often sees), a very attractive parsonage and some of the leading folks of the town as members of his church. His greatest asset in membership, the Corbyn family, has already been mentioned.

The Reverend Mr. Mobley was a grand fellow.

He was "Hail, good-fellow, well met!" Everybody liked him. He had been in the town for two years. He performed the most of the marriages, said most of the obsequies at funerals, and planned the most of the important religious occasions.

He had a real ally in the Reverend R. C. Johnston, pastor of the Presbyterian Church. There was no rivalry between them, as there was between him and the Baptist pastor. In the case of these confederates, the stronger personality dominated the weaker. The Reverend Mr. Johnston (perhaps he felt a kindredness because of the practice of sprinkling instead of baptism, which they practiced in common) backed the Reverend Mr. Mobley to the fullest extent.

The Reverend Mr. Mobley usually appealed to Mr. Corbyn before making any important move. Then, armed with his advice and approval, he dominated the town's religious affairs.

Peter Finwick had not had any dealings with Mr. Corbyn's bank for the reason that Horace Metcalf, one of his members, was cashier of the town's rival Bank. He had seen the notable Mr. Corbyn only at a distance. Although he had been in Goodnow for some weeks, he had not met Mr. Corbyn. He had not even seen the wife and daughter. But he had heard of the attractive daughter. Who could be in Goodnow for some weeks, mingling more or less with the young folk, and not hear of her?

The fall passed. Peter was active. He went up to the high school and addressed the students twice. He was beginning to make inroads upon the ground the Reverend Ellis Mobley had come to consider unquestioningly as his own. He was not backward, was Peter, although he knew that others regarded his views as peculiar with reference to the plan of salvation, church government, doctrine and practice. He

recalled that active life of his Lord, and how Jesus had gone among all classes, whether he had agreed with what they taught or not.

Incidentally, the Reverend Ellis Mobley claimed the principal of the high school as a member of the Methodist Church. This worthy had always favored his pastor. He continued to do so after Peter's arrival in Goodnow. Peter became fully aware of this, but he ignored it. One of the young lady teachers was a member of the Church of Christ. Peter worked through her and through the students he knew. And he worked somewhat upon his own nerve, independent of such means, when he chose to do so. And he had the advantage of being young and single. He appealed to the students as the Methodist pastor could not hope to do. He knew this and capitalized it.

As an incident in this connection, one day Professor Blackburn, the principal, was aghast at the suddeness and the completion of a demand placed upon him by a body of students, some of whom belonged to his own church, that he have the young preacher of the Church of Christ out for chapel talks oftener. In fact, they urged inviting him for the very next day. He assented, but not with very good grace. He had a very un-Christian prejudice against Peter, although he was so charitable, orally, whether he meant it or not, as to admit that Peter and his whole congregation had as good a chance at eternal life as did the members of the Methodist Church.

Peter went and made a rousing speech. That was one of his great points. He was a fine speaker. He could always be depended upon for a good speech, whether he was given due notice, or was called upon extemporaneously. He swept the young folk off their feet. He was a sort of an ideal among them. They frankly admired him.

And then came the Christmas festivities, and Peter's contact with the preachers of the town and with the noted Mr. Corbyn began in earnest.

Reverend Ellis Mobley took the initiative—as usual. He felt that was his prerogative. He began to plan a united Christmas service. He was not left out of any choice thing to do—if it were public. If it were a private matter, that was a horse of another color. But he was a subtle sort of fellow. He had the Reverend Mr. Johnston to suggest the place he (Mobley) should occupy on the program. He should be chief speaker.

But Peter's first contact in preparation for the Christmas services happened to be with Mr. Corbyn. It came about on this order. He was down town talking with Mr. Horace Metcalf at the bank. Mr. Metcalf had some business across the street at the rival bank. He invited Peter to go along, having in mind to put him in touch with Mr. Elias P. Corbyn.

When introduced to Mr. Corbyn, Peter found him polite, but reserved. Peter was equally polite and reserved, but not frigid.

After some remarks as to how he liked Goodnow and its people, Mr. Corbyn asked Peter whether he had been approached in regard to united Christmas services.

"Brother Mobley was talking with me the other day, and he suggested to me a united Christmas service, something on the order of what we had last year —before you came, Mr. Finwick. We had it at the Methodist church building last year because we—ah —have a more spacious auditorium than any of the other churches, you know," Mr. Corbyn said.

'Yes, I have heard," Peter said. "But I was talking with the Baptist pastor the other day, and he said that all the folks could not get into your auditor-

ium last year, Mr. Corbyn, and I should like to suggest that we move the service this year to the high school auditorium," Peter said glibly.

"Have you talked with Brother Mobley yet?" Mr. Corbyn queried as a counter move.

Horace Metcalf was somewhat surprised at the turn things were taking. The Church of Christ in Goodnow had not been used to participation in services of any kind that its denominational neighbors had arranged.

"No, I have not talked with him," Peter said in answer to Mr. Corbyn's question.

"Then too," he hastened to add, "I have heard several others, notably Doctor Jones, who by the way is a member of your church, I believe, say that they believe the auditorium at the high school, being so much larger, will be better."

"Of course," Mr. Corbyn said, "It is purely indifferent with me, and I presume it is with Brother Mobley."

"We preachers, or who ever is to decide this question ought to get together and decide it," Peter said.

"You are right," Mr. Corbyn answered. "I'll just take the liberty to call Brother Mobley and tell him so."

"Good!" Peter said. "Tell him that I should like for us to have inspiring services and that he may count on my doing whatever I conscientiously can."

This move got results. Two days later the four preachers of the town met in a corner of the Goodnow Hotel. The day being a quiet one, and the hour in the afternoon, they had comparative seclusion, even if the meeting were in such a place.

But the meeting went into a deadlock. The Reverend Mr. Johnston backed Reverend Ellis Mobley

and Peter and the Baptist preacher stood together. They were as good natured as they could be to be so firm and so antagonistic. Peter was as firm as Reverend Ellis Mobley.

In the midst of the discussion, their being deadlocked over the place to hold the joint Christmas services being apparent, the Reverend Mr. Mobley said, "I should not like to be thought persistent about holding the services in my house, but the building is closer down town than the high school, and I am sure that almost everybody can get in who may want to."

His gentle and firm way of putting the point was hard to meet. But Peter determined to meet it.

"There are not many leg-weary pedestrians about this small town, and besides a couple of blocks extra cannot hurt the most of them. And as for the feeble and infirm, I'll obligate my friend here, Mr. Gunn, to make arrangements for them. And if he cannot do that readily, then I'll help him, even if we have to carry them on our backs," Peter said. But he spoke cheerily, pleasantly, almost lightly.

Reverend Mr. Mobley turned in desperation to another point.

"Suppose we leave this matter up to a fifth party, since we stand two and two. And what more likely person could we pick than Professor Blackburn?"

He sought to win his point by this sudden shift. He knew what his parishioner would say, he thought. Clearly, two wills were clashing over this issue.

Fortune seemed to favor Peter and the Baptist pastor just at that moment, for the manager of the hotel called the Reverend Mr. Mobley to the telephone. Peter seized the opportunity.

"Is Mr. Strange, of the Strange Hardware Com-

pany, a member of your church, Mr. Johnston?" Peter asked.

"Yes, one of the strongest men I have," answered Reverend Mr. Johnston.

"He told me this morning that he thought the high school auditorium would be the better place for the meeting," Peter said. (And in very truth he had. Peter was about, always keeping in touch with things.) "Besides," he added, "I do not see how Mr. Mobley can hope to better his cause by trying to be selfish and to have the services in his house. If it gets out to the town that there was some discussion on this point and that he would not yield, then he will be hurt and not helped. I think you ought to help us to be absolutely disinterested so far as party lines are concerned and put this service above party feeling. Take it to the high school and then everybody, including your own members, will feel all right about it. And I would advise that you try to get the real sentiment, in case you have not, of your own members before you back our good friend, the Methodist preacher."

It was a bold stroke, but it won. When the Reverend Mr. Mobley returned from the telephone he explained that he had been called for a wedding at a nearby town.

"I believe, after mature thought, Brother Mobley, that it will be better to have the united Christmas service at the high school auditorium this Christmas," Mr. Johnston said.

Mr. Mobley was thunder struck. This was a sudden change for which he was not prepared. But it was done. When he was absolutely defeated he had the grace to admit it. He bowed away from it with unction. But be was rankling inside.

In the farther proceedings Peter had assigned to him as his part of the Christmas services the devo-

tional feature. The Reverend Mr. Mobley was "all set" for the big speech. Peter saw that. One point at a time was all that he could hope to win. But there was one on the ground now to make the full employment of the powers of the suave gentleman necessary.

While there were to be songs, speeches, a great tree, a Santa Claus and everything, Reverend Mr. Mobley meant to show to splendid advantage at that Christmas gathering. He worked for a solid week on the speech that he was to make. And he was a manuscript preacher. He had never achieved the ability to make a forceful extemporaneous speech. His fire was a stored fire. He was charged very methodically.

"There will be great flights of oratory on Christmas Eve night," the Reverend Mr. Gunn said to Peter one evening shortly before the scheduled Christmas service.

"Yes," Peter queried.

"I know, for I have seen the original draft of that mighty paean of eloquence," Mr. Gunn said. "I was over at Brother Mobley's study yesterday afternoon. He was not in. I sat there for some minutes waiting for him. And here, being fairly good at short hand, I made copious notes of his high points. And then I transcribed them. You will probably be interested in what he is going to say.

"I waited for some time, and then his secretary came along and said that he would not be back that afternoon. He and Mrs. Mobley had gone out of town. I don't suppose it occurred to her that I had seen this speech, but I had. And that is the most of it. Now you are not brave enough to take the bull by the horns, and when you rise to make some fitting remarks for the prayer to make a long preoration to the people in advance."

It was a taunt and a challenge. Peter could see that there was an earnestness behind the matter, And he felt almost the same way about the Reverend Ellis Mobley. For these two years Reverend Mr. Mobley had rubbed it in on his Baptist rival, and now the Reverend Mr. Gunn was ready to do some hard work to get even. And he surely welcomed Peter into the situation.

Since some remarks should be very appropriate to an introduction for a prayer on a Christmas occasion—ahem!—I shall likely make a quite liberal speech, since I see no substantial reason why I should not," Peter said.

It was partially a jest. But Peter meant it far more than the Reverend Mr. Gunn could guess.

The high school auditorium was filled to capacity. The whole town was there. That night a thief could have done well in the homes of Goodnow. The auditorium was gay. All were dressed in their best. The Reverend Mr. Mobley was literally strutting. He wore a cutaway and striped trousers. He looked the part.

Peter was simply but elegantly dressed. There was nothing clerical about him. But he looked like Apollo. His features, strong, and speaking eloquently of character, his manly head, his fine, athletic frame made him the cynosure of all eyes. The girls frankly admired him.

And there for the first time in that Christmas gathering Peter beheld the beautiful Eloise Corbyn, who was just home for the holidays. My, but she was beautiful! At least so it seemed to Peter Finwick. She had on an evening dress of some dark pink stuff, and a gorgeous silk shawl, the sort worn of evenings, was thrown across the back of her chair, with one part of it resting lightly upon her right shoulder. Even

if it was the home town and not much display was made of clothes of such an order, she wore these things with ease. She was the envy of all the girls. Her aristocratic bearing they all tried to emulate. Her raven-black hair she had skillfully done in the way that was most becoming to her. Her delicately white skin glowed under the pink of her pretty dress and was accentuated by the black hair and dark eyes.

Peter had been conspicuously placed on the stage. From this point of vantage he saw her. When he first saw her, her eyes were fastened upon him. When he surprised her looking, she turned away and blushed. There were covert glances the rest of the evening

After some songs Peter's turn came. He rose to the fullness of his splendid height, walked with perfect ease and self-possession to the center of the stage and began upon a peroration for the prayer. He began to rise in pathos and eloquence with the grace of a ship moving in a calm sea. Gradually he lifted into gusts of eloquence. He began to soar to the very skies. No matter what he was supposed to do, he had an opportunity, and he meant to use it: It meant more than a personal triumph; it meant adding to the weight of the cause of Christ. He dwelt upon the greatness of the occasion, commemorating the birth of the immaculate Son of Mary, to do honor to whom angels and arch-angels sang their seraphic anthems over the Judean hills to the shepherds who watched their flocks at night in the long ago. And as Peter soared, pluming pinions of oratory for the clouds, no less, the audience listened with rapt attention and was carried along with him. But while this was happening the Reverend Mr. Mobley began to sink in his seat. He got lower and lower. At the close of his masterful panegyric, Peter bade the audience rise for prayer. His prayer was even more touching. What

he did that night was not to be forgotten for many days. The next day he was literally the talk of the town. He had stolen the occasion, and despoiled another's triumph.

The Reverend Mr. Mobley did all he could under the circumstances. But he was placed under a cloud from which he could not come. His efforts were ruined. Peter had used his thunder surely enough. He did not actually know that this was the speech that had been planned with such painstaking care. He strongly suspected that it was, though. Now that it was taken out of the Reverend Mr. Mobley's mouth, that worthy had scarcely anything to say. His own flock were ready to admit that they had never seen it that way with him before.

The Reverend Mr. Mobley was a sick man that night. He tossed upon his bed. He wondered and wondered how things could have happened as they did. And the more he reflected the greater grew his hatred of that "Campbellite" preacher who had so signally triumphed while he had failed. Of course, though, he could not know how it had happened that Peter, with such a deadly coincidence, had thought the same thoughts he had been conning over for days. But— No. He could not accuse anyone. It was one of those pranks that life will play with such a little explanation once in a while.

CHAPTER V

Peter Finwick dreamed about a beautiful creature on that Christmas Eve night. Perhaps the nervous strain of the evening had something to do with it. He had already noted that he did not sleep so soundly on Sunday nights, due, no doubt, to the strain of preaching. And this same nerve fatigue maybe influenced him on this night. But at any rate he dreamed. He saw a pair of languorous, sympathetic brown eyes fastened upon him. And in his dream he struggled to say just the right thing. He was in a great strain, and it seemed that he could not succeed. Then his dreaming ended in an absurd turn. Shortly thereafter he awoke. He lay awake for a long time.

The next day, being Christmas, and a week day, Peter Finwick wondered just how he should spend the time. He knew whom he wanted to see. But he had not the slightest hope of being able to see her unless by the merest chance. He had only seen her sitting. He had no satisfactory idea as to how she looked in any other posture. But he felt certain she should have to be lovely in any posture or under almost any circumstances. He had an invitation out for a Christmas dinner at the home of Brother Langley, who was one of the elders of the Church of Christ. To get there Peter would have to go into another part of the town. He would be farther away from where this Miss Corbyn, who was absorbing his thoughts, lived. But in preparation for that engagement Peter dressed himself early and strolled about the business section of the town. It was quiet, very quiet, it seemed to him, especially in contrast with the rushing streets in the city where he had lived be-

fore coming to this place. He was not gratified by the smallest or most fleeting glimpse of Miss Corbyn.

At Brother Langley's, Peter was detached and not at all at his usual fine point of goodfellowship. So marked was the contrast that Mrs. Langley, who was a very motherly sort of a woman, inquired as to the state of his health. He could not say that he was not well. He simply said that if he was guilty of mental inertia and was not the bright company he ought to be that it was in no wise due to the happiness of the occasion; it was simply an off day for him in point of conviviality.

And so Christmas passed, and the next day. On the third day, down town at one of the drug stores, which was a popular rendezvous for the young people of the town (drug store sheiks are famous over all the Nation) he beheld the seraphic creature who had attracted him. She was in the City Drug Store with some of the leading young folk of the town. Peter had met but one of the group. He proceeded to make a purchase of some cough drops. It was the best demand for any kind of an order than he could think of. And that was not well founded, for he had only the slightest symptom of a cough. He went by the table where the young folk were sitting. The one whom he had met, a young lady, had her back turned, and did not see him. So Peter was forced to walk by without saying a word, or having a chance to stop for an introduction. He certainly would have seized the opportunity, had it come his way.

He saw, when he entered, and once when he was standing at the back part of the store before a patent medicine counter waiting for his cough drops, that Miss Eloise Corbyn had looked at him. On this occasion as he looked at her he did not find her disappointing in the least. In the past he had ardently admired a

girl at one meeting only to be disappointed at the next. But not so in this case. She was all on this occasion that she had been on Christmas Eve night. When her eyes had rested upon him, looked into his, on this day, he exulted, somehow, and why he did not know.

Peter could not find an excuse to dawdle, so he left the City Drug Store and went almost directly across the street to a grocery store operated by one of the brethren, and from that point he meant to see this young lady again when she should leave the drug store. He engaged in some casual conversation, almost entirely meaningless, and so passed the time.

In the drug store, conversation turned upon him as soon as he had left.

"And where does he come from?" Miss Eloise Corbyn asked one of her companions, after Peter's name had been mentioned.

"Interested in this preacher?" one of the young men at the table chided her.

"I think he is just about one of the nicest young men I have seen," she answered frankly. "He's educated, dignified—and—and good looking!"

"But think of his religion!" one of the girls said.

"I don't see what that's got to do with it," Miss Corbyn answered. "He's as much right to what he believes as we have, hasn't he?"

"Perhaps so. But how on earth can he believe what he does And how can he—being all that he is, be willing to associate with the church he is?"

"You need to be broadened by travel and a larger contact with the world, my dear," Eloise retorted with some sting, which she had intended. She had spoken a truth, the full extent of which she herself was not conscious. And since it appeared that she had spoken from her coign of vantage as the best travelled and most aristocratic of the group, instinctively the com-

pany of young people drew away from her, and the conversation ended abruptly.

Thereafter two of the girls, when they were alone, accused her of snobbery.

"Just as I thought", said one to the other. "I thought she'd let going away to college turn her head. She's almost a cad. She thinks any one—even this—this preacher—who has been away to college, is better than anybody else. She knows he's a college man. First thing we know the town can't hold her. Mark my word!"

But harking back to the point where Peter was watching from a window across the street to see her when she left the drug store. He was almost entirely concealed. But he could see very well the entrance to the drug store and a good deal of the street besides. He watched her with admiration. She came out of the drug store with leisure, swinging along as though she did not have a care in the world. And she loitered and looked all about the street, seeing everything and everybody that there was to see. And still she half seemed in search of some one else.

She left the group of young folk temporarily and went a few doors down to her father's bank. She was gone inside for a couple of minutes, and then she emerged with her father. He came to the door without his hat, evidently wishing to escort her that far without leaving the bank. He stood and talked with her a minute, and then turned back into the bank while she went back to the group of young folk. They all—there were six of them—had climbed into an automobile while she went to see her father. It was the Corbyn automobile, the finest in town, and Miss Eloise was driving it. She took her place at the wheel and they were off.

Peter made up his mind that when she should return to college after the holidays he would take the

same train, provided she did not leave on a Sunday. In that case he would be in the pulpit. But he wanted to go to see his folk anyway, and he was hoping she would leave toward the first of the week. Then, as his home lay in the direction that her trian would take her, he would have the pleasure of riding the same train for about one hundred miles. But it so happened that she left on a Sunday morning, and, of course, that ended any chance that he otherwise might have had to see her more as she was leaving.

After she fled the old town it was infinitely less interesting than it had been. What a change it made! —considering that nothing had been changed. Every material aspect was the same.

Peter was gaining too much popularity. The Church of Christ was growing. The preacher's personality, strong and virile, was making itself felt. The other religious folk tried to check any advantage that he and the church might have by sneering at the doctrine, which they characteristically misrepresented. Peter was said to be preaching "water salvation, or baptismal regeneration", and a number of other things that he would not have dreamed of preaching.

The chief enemies were becoming fellow-religionists. Peter had dared come out with all his might on the gospel plan of salvation. He had stressed baptism for the remission of sins, and that this act is a burial in water. He gave the Scripture in the sixth chapter of Romans and pressed it to the confusion and chagrin of the paedobaptists. Of course these sermons stirred the town, and they came to the ears of Reverend Ellis Mobley. The plain truth was that Peter desired to get into a debate on the important points of difference between him and any other teachers of the town. But Reverend Mr. Mobley was too smooth for that. And he knew too much for that.

He knew that his cause could not gain anything by such a course. Therefore, he determined, as practically all of his brethren long since have determined, to avoid the dangers of an open encounter, and he set to work to circumvent in another way the influence of a doctrine which he could not openly challenge or meet. He was looking for such an opportunity when it came. It cannot be charged that he stooped to originate the supposed master stroke which he helped to undertake to deliver. He did not do that. But he did, very subtly, add to that stroke.

One day in the late winter Peter was drawn off by one of the brethren and told quite frankly that a dreadful tale against him was going the round of the town. Brother Webster, who told him, expressed fear that it would greatly reflect upon the church. And he feared that it was on everybody's tongue.

The tale told on him was quite scandalous, and was directed against his chasity. What it was, of those few who were satiating their foul souls upon it, no two were agreed. But at least it was intended to impeach his character as a minister and thereby render him useless in the community.

It was charged that his misconduct had taken place over at Ironton, a town some fifty miles away, where Peter had never been in his life.

When Peter was told this tale he said simply:

"There is not a word of truth in it. I was never at that place in my life."

"I know, Brother Finwick. Of course, there is no truth in it. But the devil has to fight by some means. And he is not particular about his means. If he can blacken a character to dull the message he will gladly do it. He cannot fight the doctrine, you know, for we hold the truth, and so he has attacked your character. And if we can get to the bottom of this we'll find some very religious but misguided person is

largely responsible for it, more than likely. The devil would not use an outsider for this sort of work. He has likely selected some churchman. And I have my suspicion that he has selected a preacher. I have already conferred with Brother Langley about it, and he is as mad as can be. I never saw him so mad. I was almost afraid that he would do something he ought not to do before he cooled down a bit. But he has set to work to get to the head of this thing, and he'll come pretty close to doing it.

"Now what do you think about it?" he asked Peter.

"Just let it go", came the answer.

To say that Mr. Webster was surprised was putting it mildly.

"'You can indeed each anxious fear remove,
For even scandal dies if you approve',

was written in the prologue for Sheridan's play, 'The School for Scandal.' And in that play the whole problem of dealing with scandal is gone through. I think I agree with the two lines I have just quoted. I suspect that to ignore what is told of a scandalous nature will kill it much easier than to talk and fight it. You know, the most things grow by agitation. I am not in favor of stirring any such matters as this. It's just an empty tale and it will fall of its own weight if it is let alone. If the devil, regardless of his agents, could get us into a fight over this thing he would stand off and laugh up his sleeve. Probably, too, you exaggerate, because you are so concerned, the probable evil consequences of this tale. Maybe it is not very widely scattered.

"But if the devil is trying to wreck my preaching the word and blistering the theories of men as I have been doing by using this method of attack on me, he

has chosen the wrong fellow. That does not happen to be my weak point.

"I'll hold my head just a little higher (there were some who already thought he had it elevated enough), go about a little more and be more noticeable as a preacher than I have been. This will start me on a campaign of visiting that I have been intending to get to anyway. I'll try now to visit everybody in the business section and a lot of private homes as well. I'll literally kill this move by giving the people something to think about.

"Watch my smoke! You are one of the elders. Call the others together. Give your indorsement to my holding a special series of meetings. It's some months yet until our meeting of the Summer. Besides it won't hurt to have two in the year. And if you'll indorse holding a meeting, I'll get right busy at having a lot of hand-bills run off and then I'll get me a band of boys and scatter them all over this part of the world. We'll first take the residential section, divide it into parts and then distribute these bills to all the homes. Then we'll make the business section. And Saturday when the farmers all come into town we'll put bills in all their wagons and automobiles. And I am in favor of starting the meeting next Sunday. This is Thursday. We can surprise everybody with this thing, and perhaps that will make for its success and not for a failure."

"This is a very sudden proposal, Brother Finwick, and I don't know what about it. I am afraid that we cannot make the go of it that we ought to under such circumstances. But of course I'll do whatever I can. It does look like the situation demands something."

"You are right. I believe in taking war into the enemy's camp. I do not believe in sitting still, wait-

ing for an attack, when we can turn the tables upon the enemy and put him upon the defensive. This blessed little old community just has to have something to talk about. If it cannot be something worth while, then it will degenerate to a scandal.

"And I'll announce on the hand-bills a list of strong doctrinal subjects—baptism, total hereditary depravity, or inborn sin, the possibility of falling from grace once one has become a child of God. I'll cover the whole ground. Let us not stand still and let the enemy attack us upon grounds he has chosen. Let us hurry into this thing and surprise the gentleman by carrying the fight to his own ground.

"In reference to the other plan, that is, of being surprised into a fight, I have had occasion to study the other course and to see that it is a failure.

"Do you know young Brother Black? Well, he's a single fellow. The devil tried the same tactics on him and succeeded. This affair took place in another state. The tale, every bit as black as this one, got abroad. Brother Black was holding a meeting there. It came to his attention. He flew into a rage. From the pulpit he delivered a tirade against such a course and such a falsehood; said the one who told that, or even repeated it, was a liar and knew it. Of course the devil was looking for that. He stirred up one fellow, a big husky, whose wife had told the tale, or repeated it, to go to the preacher and start a fight on the basis that he had called the said husky's wife a liar. The thing was quite bad. The brethren were very glad to have Brother Black close the meeting and get out of town. So I am sure that fighting the devil openly on that score is not a real success. You only help him to scatter fire. And be assured too that this is no new plan with the devil. He'd like mighty well to start some sort of a tale on every preacher in

the Church of Christ. And he usually selects some sectarian whose head is filled with prejudice to start the tale.

"Let's make the folks forget this thing, as many as have heard it. Let's burn 'em up! But let us do it on another point. Let us attack the doctrines of men which they hold. Then they'll forget to fight and they will be running to defend their own. It will be as it was with King Saul. He was pursuing David in the wilderness. While he was pursuing David word came to him that the Philistines had attacked the northern part of his kingdom. He had to leave off the pursuit of David and go to the defense of his kingdom. And that is what will happen here."

"I suspect you are right, Brother Finwick," Brother Webster said.

"I know I am," said Peter.

And so Peter's plans were put into operation, And he did burn 'em up! He went at the matter in dead earnest. He set the whole town by the ears. Some were as angry as hornets. But Peter cured the ailment he was treating. The Methodists and the Baptists were divided into opposing camps. Every man's hand was turned against his neighbor.

One day after the meeting had got under way, and everybody was talking it, Elder Langley and Elder Webster were discussing the tactics that were being employed. They agreed the move was wise.

"I think I got pretty close to the head of this thing. Some hot-headed Methodists passed the tale. I traced the thing to them and could get no farther. It is probable that they had help. I should not be surprised if a preacher is mixed up in this. But however that may be, we've got the devil on the run now, it don't matter what guise he comes under. And he's not very particular about his agents, as this case proves!

"But it's just like I feared before we sent for Brother Finwick. You know they don't start such tales as this on a married man like they do a single man. I told you brethren that I was afraid of it. And I am the one who caused you to put that point in the letter that was first written to him," Brother Langely said.

"Yes," Elder Webster agreed. "But we hope this is the last of the matter."

"Amen!" devoutly echoed Elder Langley.

After the campaign to arouse the better qualities of the people of the town, even if it did arouse their religious antagonism on some points, and through the earnest effort to cause them to forget to satisfy any instinct they might have for a vulture's foul example of living upon carrion, Peter Finwick began to find the town of Goodnow infinitely boresome. He was irked by the pettiness and triviality of the town. It palled upon him dreadfully.

Perhaps the restlessness of the season of Spring, when the sap began to rise, the buds to burst and the birds to sing, also agitated him. And it does not take nor require cognizance from an intelligence for that to happen. But as a challenge to him to forget the vast monitions of a gigantic, struggling nature as it wrestled in the embrace of Spring, which has oddly been called gentle (thought gentle perhaps because this great struggle is more or less inarticulate), Peter was called upon to consider a problem that began to engross considerable thought. It was one of those perplexing divorce cases. And this one had been the bane of the Goodnow Church—not in a disciplinary way, but at least it had caused considerable talk and some little disturbance. At this time it did not develop into an acute problem, however, for Peter

managed to have it put off in view of the coming of a great evangelist who was due in the early Summer. And yes, Brother Oliver Watts did have a hand in it. In fact, he was the moving genius (if the term be not too badly misused) that brought this old chronic distemper of the church to the open again. To change the figure, it had only been a smothering volcano since Peter had been in town.

The thing again threatened eruption when Evangelist Wilks Barton came to Goodnow for the "big meetin'," or the series of meetings in the early Summer. The preacher had been engaged for this revival for two years. His great popularity made it impossible to secure him on a shorter notice.

Brother Barton was an evangelistic type who bore the peculiar burdens of his line of work. He would not do, and had not for years, done "located" work. That is, he had not settled down to preach for one congregation for months or years on a stretch. Such did not suit him. He was of the traveling evangelistic type. He was considered by very, very many to be a great preacher. On the fundamentals of the gospel, or on primary obedience, which is to be rendered by the alien sinner, Evangelist Wilks Barton was undoubtedly strong. In fact he was a very apt student of all those problems in church government and work that agitated the churches. He was alive to all pressing issues of whatever nature as those issues might affect his calling. And he was alert because he was constantly in touch with great bodies of people. And he had found from his twenty-five years in the ministry that human nature is pretty much the same all over the land. He had grown to be tolerant and broad-minded. His schooling was in the broad school of experience, and it had made him adaptable

and peculiarly free from the narrow sectionalism that was at once the bane and the boon of so many preachers. It had made some and it had ruined others. Brother Barton had seen it do both. If one "belonged" in a certain section of the great land, and knew the feelings and attitudes of that section he could verily come to occupy a large seat, and climb to a good height. But if he did not "belong," he might find sectionalism an effectual bar to his progress. And he would have to disarm that very slowly. He would have to live long enough in that section to prove the stuff he was made of—to overcome the prejudice against him. If he were from the East and "would shake sects in on their baptism by a mere handshake," he was regarded with aversion. If he were from the West then the East had an infinite variety of aversions to him. While many strong men had gone West and succeeded, not many strong men had ever gone East and "got away with it." And those few were mostly of Brother Barton's type—that is, of the larger popular evangelistic type. Why was that? The West would accept the East's strong men to its stronger and larger pulpits, but the East had not accepted the West's preachers except in the case of the better known men of the traveling evangelistic type. Peter had reflected upon this thing, this peculiar sectionalism of the church, and when Brother Barton came for the revival, or evangelistic campaign, "he communed with him of all that was in his heart." The younger of the two men became an interested listener. He had lived—he had been so blessed—where he might observe the working of the church on a large scale. And his mind was active enough that he was a student on a large scale, anyway. When he asked Brother Barton about this and a number of other points that person answered with

a readiness and a breadth of view that made whatever point he touched very interesting.

"On that point, Brother Finwick, I take it that there are sufficient natural causes for the situation. It is the human equation in the divine situation. You see, the drift of the population is from East to West. It has been all along. The tide may turn in a measure some day, but that is the way it is now. Those folk who were members of the church over East went West. Out there they brought memories of the power and fame of their Eastern preachers. And those preachers were accordingly called West, through the influence of the members who had come from the East. That is the explanation. Only those preachers in the West who have become national characters are called East, where they are personally unacquainted. Personal acquaintance is the basis of the call of the most of the preachers West. But a reputation, and that almost altogether, is the basis of a call East. And accordingly those who are called East are almost altogether of the specialized type—the highly evangelistic, somewhat after modern methods. They are those men who are great in the pulpit for a series of meetings.

"The Church of God flows along these natural lines. You will observe this. The drift was first from Pennsylvania south through Kentucky and on down, and thence, following the drift of the population, it went West, and now it has flowed to the Pacific coast. New European hordes have come on to our Eastern shores and they have pushed the older population back and back. And so all the older churches of the country, nearly all, anyway, are stronger in the South and West. They have lost strength, if anything, up on the Atlantic seaboard. At least it is, in most cases, a fierce struggle up there

just to hold their own. And this Southern European horde that comes in is so alien in thought and training that the gospel has less freedom with them than among the thoroughly American population in the South and West. That explains, you will see, our rapid growth as a church in certain sections. We are sectional in feelings and we progress in sections along the lines of natural causes. Christianity is always working with this human side of things. And it is like the hand of the dyer in Shakespeare's picture—'The hand of the dyer is subdued to the stuff it works in.' To go against such great natural swells of the tides of humanity is like going against the tide of the sea when it is coming in. If one becomes a victim of sectionalism and must buck against it, it is just his misfortune, and in that thing Providence may seem to be unkind. But after all it is a natural law."

"I see," Peter said. And the reason assigned he accepted, because of its apparent truth. Thereafter he reflected upon this explanation a great deal.

And in their conversations, which were carried on at intervals all the while Wilks Barton was in Goodnow, Peter introduced also the subject of the ministry of the word and the current opinions upon it.

"I want to ask you about the so-called 'pastor' system, too, Brother Barton," Peter said as they two lounged on a wide piazza at the home of one of the members one afternoon. They had been invited out to this place for dinner. In the afternoon they made themselves comfortable, and being left alone for a time, they entered into conversation on the subject.

"I think I may say that I am safe from criticism in the first place—that I am practically immune upon the subject, for the reason that all accept the manner in which I do my work in the gospel," Evangelist Wilks Barton said in an introductory for his remarks. "Thus I eliminate any personal or selfish motive in

the discussion of the subject, and admittedly that ought to help me to a free, unbiased point of view. But let me say that the kind of evangelistic work in which I am engaged I follow simply for the reason that that appeals to me, and not because of any fear of criticism. There are some features of it that may properly be regarded as a disadvantage, but I long ago weighed those points and cast my vote in favor of the traveling type of evangelism. You know (and at this point Evangelist Wilks Barton became sort of facetious, or slightly ludicrous, and there was a twinkle in his eyes that scintillated with such a show of intelligence), the Apostle Paul traveled a great deal. I am in need of his example as he went from Antioch to Cyprus and then to Pamphyllia, to Antioch in Pisidia, to Iconium, to Derbe and Lystra—as he went from Troas to Phillippi, to Thessalonica, to Berea, to Athens and Corinth, to Ephesus. He traveled a great deal and usually stayed but a little time at a place. I know this part of Paul's history well. And I also travel a great deal. If I am like most men, I like to make this comparison—and, of course, it must be favorable. Only those who occupy a different angle of vision will seek out those points of difference for an invidious comparison. And that is done by those who want to talk about the 'pastor system', I fear."

"Yes," Peter agreed. "That's true. But why should I be called a pastor because I settle down for some months or years, maybe, at one place when I find that the Apostle Paul stayed for three full years at Ephesus? Why is not this instance enough to keep me from being denominated a 'pastor' in a derisive sense if the point of comparison you make justifies another practice?"

"It all sounds very well, Brother Finwick, but I

am afraid that you will be convicted by some regardless of this example."

"Well, if I preach every Sunday at one place and visit the sick, and teach 'publicly and privately,' 'night and day' as Paul did, I must be a 'pastor' then to some—who just will have it so. What about the fellow who preaches at different places on the four Sundays of the month? Is he not a 'circuit-rider'? It appears to me that he is. But after all the trouble is not in what I am doing nor in what the fellow who preaches at a different place each Sunday is doing. There is no wrong in his preaching of the word—provided he preaches it to the full, as it is written—but the trouble lies with those acrimonious spirits who rush into the world of a perverted theology and dogmatic practice and then rush back with some terms that they have found, and because they find some little point of analogy, some points of likeness, they want to go to nick-naming the faithful ministers of the word who are laboring the best they can in their respective fields."

"You are right, Brother Finwick, and the point is well taken, but again it is the hand subdued by the stuff it works in."

"Yes," Peter added with some warmth, for he felt keenly, "But the disgrace of it is that this comes not from the lowest of the people, nor the basest of the carnal in the church, but from the preachers themselves who seemingly love to haggle over terms, invent analogies, borrow words from the denominations about them and then to brand their brethren with them and to cry, 'Unsound.'"

"My dear boy, the preachers and writers must have something to rail about. You cannot afford to rob them of such a high privilege. Of course, they love to haggle over terms.

"Don't you know that the common people have always heard him gladly, and that they have never been interested in splitting theological hairs? Not all the theologians are in the denominations, but the theologians, of whatever brand and wherever found, have filled the world with its confusions and differences. Our brethren need a unified view, and on all questions of opinion, as they have preached, they ought to practice charity. But watch this spirit, my boy. Don't exceed the bounds of what is allowed. Some men who are autocrats on opinions—and let me say to you in deepest confidence, there are editors of some religious journals and there are preachers who use the press for autocratic ends—will ruin you with the people if you happen injudiciously to cross their opinions. The same thing is true if you dare to do things on a larger scale than they are used to seeing them done. I am sorry to say that some who sit in high seats do not want big men. They will crucify them. Cramp your spirits as much as you can, and always try to look with obsequious eyes toward the powers that be. Worm approval out of them succinctly. Appeal to them in the sense of addressing a superior, or else they will slay you. And you perhaps may not enter the forum to be heard—to testify in your own behalf. This might be refused you.

"You know, we are not supposed to have any earthly heads of authority. But while we lack an ecclesiastical hierarchy in organization we are not wanting in spirit—at least in some instances. There are those who would exercise the powers of an hierarchy if they could."

Evangelist Wilks Barton had spoken in deepest scorn. He did not want to usurp authority; he did not demand a place beyond the theory of govern-

ment in the church which he preached and which had been preached by the great restorers of apostolic Christianity; and he could not understand those who seemed to want such authority.

"But don't forget, Brother Finwick, that we have the correct message. We preach the gospel as it is written. And I advise you not to despair—ever. But by all means be as wise as a serpent—especially with preachers, and editors, and elders!"

"I am pretty certain that one had better try to be!" Peter answered.

"But as to this divorce case. I want to talk with you about it. It is more immediate than the other things about which we have been talking. From my viewpoint it matters little what becomes of me. I am here but a few days, and then I move on to another place. If this thing is settled scripturally though, it will smooth your path as long as you stay here. You know that the local man, the preacher who lives at a place and preaches for a congregation must be very careful of his decisions and actions. He has to face them constantly. But the man who travels as I do appears in the pulpit at his best with his fine selections of sermons, which are his masterpieces, and he then takes his way, free from the toil that the local man must face. Besides, seeing the home preacher so often, tends in the long run, unless he is a very stern character, to lessen his dignity, and the magic of his reputation slips from him. This makes every small person with whom he comes in contact feel that he is the equal in every way of the preacher. And truly, this is at the foundation of many ills. The preacher must do as Paul said to Timothy, make people respect him. It is said in this language: "Let no man despise thy youth." But just the same be-

tween the way I face this problem and the way you face it there is a great difference. You see, I am being strictly honest, for I want to see you succeed. And I do know that these problems take on an angle."

"Have you been hearing a lot about this case, Brother Barton?"

"Not a great deal. Brother Watts seems to be pressing the matter. He says that J. B. Winthrop and his wife are living in adultery. Incidentally, he told me that he had tried to get you to act upon the case and that you had not."

"That is true," Peter said.

"Then I consider that a recommendation. You are more judicious than some preachers. I know a preacher who not long ago lost his job and got the whole church into a fuss over a question of human conduct. It was gone about in the wrong way, and it was of such a nature—doubtful, to say the least—that it was hazardous. You know it is said that 'fools rush in where angels fear to tread'."

"An outsider who did not like one of the leading men of the church, an elder, reported to the preacher that he had seen that elder on the street of a distant city 'dog drunk.' It may have been true, and it may not have been true. Anyway, the preacher, who thought he was the guardian of the whole life of the church, called this elder into answer. He denied the charge. The whole church lined up and took sides. The fuss lasted for some time. The preacher was kicked out, figuratively speaking, and the elder also lost his standing. So be slow and cautious to get into these things. They are bad. Oftentimes they almost ruin churches and preachers. Of course, though, I do not think that we ought to shun our responsibilities. But we must be sure, before we

start, that we have control of the situation and that we are moved for the right purpose and are properly and undoubtedly in the defense of right. When duty becomes so plain that we cannot be mistaken, then we must go ahead.

"And I know of another divorce case, so very like this one, that hurt a church dreadfully. The woman in the case said that her husband had been guilty of conjugal infidelity, although she did not divorce him for that reason, but for cruelty. She then married another man. She was charged by some with violating the Scriptures. You know that there is a division even among preachers with reference to the interpretation of the Scripture on this point, whether one can marry again, under any circumstances; whether one has divorced the other for fornication or not. Well, one of the leaders of the church had the view that one can never remarry while the husband or wife lives, regardless of the exception which Jesus made, both for divorce and for remarriage. That church had an awful stench over it.

"In this case, I understand, the woman who was remarried said she had a Bible ground for divorcing her husband. And I hold that the Scripture which gives the ground for the divorce makes the separation so complete that the innocent party is entirely at liberty. Fornication, in my understanding of the matter, so nullifies the marriage relationship as to make it the same to the innocent party as death. That party is free, and so being free, absolutely, unbound and loosed, that the other may remarry something on the basis of the first marriage, for the first marriage has ceased to bind. Jesus Christ put in the one exception in the case of divorce—and since, if mere separation is desired, that might be obtained without either

one committing fornication, it occurs to me that Jesus only used the exception of fornication in the case of divorce not so much for the idea of separation as for the farther objective of complete liberation and the privilege of being married to a pure person and not to a fornicator. The final objective occupies my mind, and not the first point, which is mentioned by the Apostle Paul as being possible only upon the ground of agreement."

"Brother Watts is determined to push this case," Peter said. "I believe, although I do not know, that he intends to do harm with it. And I suspect he has it in mind to make it uncomfortable for me. He has urged action, and always I have counseled delay. You see, the woman was not a regular attendant at church for a long time. Therefore, the problem was not brought. Then, too, she had been offended about her divorce by some one in the church, and that had helped to make her cold. After I had been here for a while, and things began to warm up and the church to grow, she and her husband came to church. He was not a member. The first husband had been, but this man was not when she married him. This second husband demanded baptism. I baptized him upon the presumption that he was scripturally married. And the woman was restored to the fellowship of the church after having been away for some time. And the rest of the case you know," Peter concluded.

"Brother Watts thinks one may not remarry, even though divorced for fornication. And he has urged this case upon me, too."

"Exactly, Brother Barton, and that's a part of the problem we have in the Church of Christ. There is a brazen amount of presumption in the case of thousands who are along Brother Watts' line. Such men,

it makes not any difference how ignorant and unlettered they may be, think they are as much to be heard as the most learned preacher in the church. I regard this as one of the great curses of the Restoration Movement. At first there was a great onslaught against the presumptions of the clergy. Campbell and others attacked them with all their might, and largely destroyed their strong-holds. But when the members of the Church of Christ had been filled with this spirit of felling the mighty clergy, they retained the power as preacher-disputers and turned that same instrument of doubt and of questioning upon the preachers in the church. It was simply giving them an instrument that they knew not how to handle. And they have done an untold amount of harm. It is a great evil, as I see it, that the most unlettered crank in the Church of Christ has the effrontery to dispute the statements of the most learned Bible student we have. What this generation needs and must have is a strong teaching to counteract this evil which has made cranks the bane of the churches. It is more so in the Church of Christ than in any church in the land. And of course the reason is something on the order of a hang-over from the Restoration Movement. Now, we must teach this effrontery out of the people, and cause them to respect their leaders properly. It can be done. In the hue and cry of the day of restoring primitive Christianity every little soldier was made to think himself a David. It is a misfortune that this spirit has percolated, as a great list of preacher-killers, the incompetent rank of the people. A scalpel in the hand of a great surgeon is a wonderful thing, but in the hand of a half-insane man it is a means of death. Campbell knew how, where, and how much to destroy the power of the clergy, but many modern little men knew not how to use the instrument they have seized. And

here is an example. You have been prepared by years of college work and then for twenty-five years you have gone up and down the land meeting such problems as this, and then in contrast here is Brother Watts whose schooling was very meager, whose natural ability is restricted and whose study of the Bible is very scant, presuming to try to meet with you on the basis of equality in the discussion of a question on which you are a specialist. It is another case of the skilled surgeon and the ignorant crank."

"Yes. That's exactly how it is," Evangelist Wilks Barton agreed.

"And with reference to the reasons behind this case, I think you have exactly sized it up," Peter said, "When I came here Brother Watts tried to get me to run his notion on teaching over the congregation. And when I would not take and execute it, but rather went to his home and undertook to set him right, he became offended. And he has not got over it yet. He does not care so much about the status of the case of Brother and Sister Winthrop. He is after making my path as rocky as he can.

"Anyway, since when did he become the official keeper of the Lord's church? But fellows like him, rushing into cases about which they may not be certain, are the bane of preachers. Sister Winthrop says that she was divorced because of fornication. She should know more about the case than Brother Watts does.

"But Brother Watts has gone about talking this case and asserting that fellowship ought to be denied these good people. And he has made it unpleasant a bit, I'll admit."

"Now don't let this thing worry you, Brother

Finwick. Just you put a question in the box that we have up at the church for Bible questions during this meeting, and I'll get on it and ride it with all my might. I'll see if I cannot smooth this thing out a bit. I think we can leave Brother Watts standing practically by himself."

Peter was deeply grateful. And powerful man that he was in Scriptures, and great as was his reputation, Evangelist Wilks Barton did put that thing beyond Brother Watts' reach.

CHAPTER VI

Although Peter could not know it, Eloise Corbyn had managed to keep in touch, indirectly, with what was going on in Goodnow while she was away in school. And she also kept some points of interest of him. She corresponded with a girl friend who told her all she could learn authentically about Peter. This friend, Juanita Ethridge, knew that Eloise was thinking a great deal about this young preacher. Miss Ethridge was a member of the Reverend Mr. Mobley's church, the same as was her chum, but she sided often times with her chum in regard to Peter Finwick and was not in anywise prejudiced against him because of the doctrine he preached, nor because of the doctrine she held and the environment in which she had been reared. Her sympathies were with her friend. In Eloise's case, Peter was the emblem of all that was fine. He was almost a paragon of all the virtues to her young and romantic eyes, and that in spite of the difference between his religion and hers. With her it was a case of "Abie's Irish Rose." What mattered blood, or religion, or training, when one had the fire of love in the veins? Love is not an alien to any blood. It is equally at home in all veins. Did not Abie the Jew marry the Irish girl? Besides, there would be ethnic strain in these two. There was a similarity of generation, of ambition, of education. The only struggle possible would be over the religious element. But let that take care of itself in due time. We will not anticipate.

When school was out Eloise went immediately to visit a friend in Connecticut, and so she did not get home in the early Summer. In fact, just after the

close of the revival in which Evangelist Wilks Barton was the preacher. At that time Peter Finwick had but two more weeks to stay in Goodnow before leaving for some engagements for the Summer.

But on the first Sunday night that she was home, Eloise, her friend Juanita and two other girls went to hear Peter preach. It upset him quite a bit for them to come so unexpectedly into the audience. But it seemed only to make him more capable, to arouse all his latent powers, and he preached a stirring discourse. At the close of the service, as was usual with him, he rushed to the rear of the building to shake hands with all as they left. And for the first time he held the trim, smooth, shapely hand of Eloise Corbyn. Also for the first time he spoke to her. He had not been introduced to her. Her friend he had met, and so Miss Ethridge introduced him to her.

"I'm having a pa-a-arty (she drawled this out with magnificence) at my house Tuesday night, Mr. Finwick, and I want you to come," Miss Ethridge said.

"I shall be delighted, indeed," Peter said.

"Then we may count on you?" eagerly inquired Miss Corbyn.

"Unless something providential arises, you may look for me," he assured her.

With a lingering look Miss Corbyn left with her friends. But at the very door of the vestibule she looked back to see that he also had turned and was looking at her. She carried the memories of those little happenings to bed with her that night and cherished them as one will cherish the falling petals of the last rose of Summer—with great delicacy for fear of losing them.

Peter Finwick had been popular with the young people of the town in spite of the prejudices of their

elders and the religious differences that stood between. But while this was true, there had been a sort of reserve, deft, inexplicable, but certain, between him and the groups of young people of other connections. Those infinite things of the spirit that form groups, intangible and ethereal as they are must be felt to an extent, even when counter-claims are pulling on them. And so while his age, his social nature, his kindliness and manliness were all in favor of a social intercourse between him and any group of young people the town had, he felt that indefinite, but certain, difference of the spirit. The one thing to obliterate almost to annihilation any trace of reserve felt toward him on the account of a difference in training and connection was accomplished by Eloise Corbyn on the night of the party.

The fact that she monopolized Peter—which was not very hard to do—although his sense of decorum was struggling against it—broke down all restraint against him. Easily Miss Corbyn was the social leader of the town among the young folk. When she openly showed her enjoyment of Peter's company all the rest of the girls fell over one another, figuratively, to get to him. He was more a social lion than ever.

This made some of other young men of Goodnow furious, but Peter seemed so unconscious of the effects of the attention and so natural toward those same young men that they could not, with propriety, think hard of him. He showed such a fine manliness toward them, in spite of circumstances, that they too admired him.

Things were getting on with Miss Corbyn and Peter.

"Mother, I'm having a caller this evening," Eloise

said to her mother one day in the second week after her return from Connecticut.

"It's not Mr. Jenkins, is it?" Mrs. Corbyn asked.

Mr. Jenkins was a young lawyer of a fine family whose reputation was growing fast. He lived at a neighboring town called Petworth, which was larger than Goodnow and a county seat, too. Young Mr. Jenkins' attention had been quite acceptable to Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn. They thought very well of him both on his family's account and on his own merit. They believed he would make his mark in the world.

"No, it's not Mr. Jenkins, or I should say, Arthur. It's—it's Mr. Finwick."

"What!"

"I said it is Mr. Finwick." This time without trepidation and with a little defiance. "Do you object?"

"I did not necessarily mean that I do, my dear, I was simply surprised," Mrs. Corbyn answered.

"Mother, I believe you do care. You seem to show it. But I don't see how you could care. He's educated, genteel, refined, and while I don't know it, I suspect that he is from a very fine family—every whit as good as ours. I did find out from him that his folk are quite well fixed financially, and his father is a high salaried man with a big lumber company. He told me this, for I wanted to know, and I very carefully let him know that I wanted to know. I knew how you and father look at such things."

"It's not his family. I suppose they are all right. I do not object to him on that ground. It's—his religion!"

" I thought so. But personally I see nothing wrong with that. His religion has not made him anything but the most exemplary while in our midst. And no

one else's religion has made him do any better than that."

"You and I will not argue that point," Mrs. Corbyn said with a flush of dignity and some little warmth.

"Then shall I call him and have him not to come?"

"Certainly not. I said for you to let him come—on the social basis. And I hope he will refrain from trying to make a proselyte out of you. But I am afraid that Brother and Sister Mobley will come at the same time. And you know Brother Mobley would not approve."

"Perhaps not. But who cares what Brother Mobley thinks. Is this not a free country?"

"Hush, my dear. You are so young. And you don't think very far in advance. As you grow older your values will change."

"I hope not, Mother." Without flaring, kindly.

Eloise kissed her mother. Presently she was at the piano singing and playing. And to Mrs. Corbyn, who was observing, she seemed to be quite happy. She wondered what this apparent happiness in her daughter had to do with Peter Finwick. And the truth was that she was a little alarmed.

She made up her mind that she would talk with Elias P. Corbyn about this thing, and they would try to work out a satisfactory plan of procedure.

"And so you are leaving us Monday?" Miss Corbyn asked Peter during the evening.

"Yes, I must go. Duty calls me to other points."

"We hope you will not be gone long," she said.

"I don't know how long, but I suspect it will be a long time."

"Then you are not coming back?

"While I have not told the church folk that I shall not, I suspect I shall not. They have asked me to return, and I thanked them for the invitation. But that is all I did. I merely thanked them without making a commitment. But of course I do not know how they have taken or understood the matter. But I felt that I could not, under the circumstances of my life, make them a definite statement."

"I am sure you made the church grow a great deal," she said. "I think everybody is fully conscious of that. I suppose all the members of your congregation think that. And I know the folk of the town would love to have you return. And I want you to return," she said quite evenly, without apparent embarrassment. But her heart was all a-flutter. She could not have described her emotions.

"That makes more difference with me than it does for any one else to want me to return," he said with equal candor. "But even if I should return you would not be here. You would go back to your college, and that is a long way from here. I have thought over the miles. But the space is such a substantial barrier that my coming here again would not do any good. And with you gone you have no idea how boresome this place can be."

"Well," she said, and dropped her head to study. "I haven't talked with my parents about it, but I may go to some school closer to home this fall. I have been thinking of asking to change to Waverly College at Andover (Andover being a mutually known city of nearly a quarter of a million human souls, and which the reader may know under another name). It is scarcely more than a hundred miles away. And I could come home week-ends occasionally. Or, if I should select, and be allowed to go to a co-educational institution instead of a girls' college, there's Patmont

University in the same city. They may let me go to one of these instead of sending me so far away. I wanted to go far away last fall. But now I don't. I've had the experience. And besides, you are here now."

While she talked a light came into Peter's eyes.

"A capital idea!" he said. "Andover is a delightful city—and—and I think I may be there too in the fall! It is not settled yet, but I have some friends in a church there who are pulling for me to locate with them. The church is a good one, with not a very large membership, very comfortably housed, in a delightful suburb."

"Oh, I know now I'll try to get a change. Andover! And I hope we both make it," she said.

"No more sincerely than I do," he said.

"It will mean a promotion, won't it?" she asked.

He could see that her knowledge of church life was very elementary. She seemed to think that churches were large or small, powerful or weak, according to the city in which they were located.

"Yes, I rather think it will mean a promotion, although there is no regular scale in this matter. You see it is at once both a question of church government and a question of contributory strength toward a numerical condition. If the church—answering the last first and the first last, for 'the last shall be first and the first last,' the Bible says—if the church has a good age, has been surrounded by favorable conditions and has had a strong personnel, an able body of men to direct its affairs, then, unless to offset this there are extreme conditions of deflections, it will be a strong church. It all depends, you see. Many things enter into the growth and development of a church. And because this is true, a church may be strong and great

in a small town, while at the same time a church may be weak and poor in a large city.

"So we cannot judge of the strength of a church by its geographical location always, or by the size of the town in which it is located. But of course the law of averages has it these days that the stronger churches are in the larger cities. That is natural.

"The second part of the thought concerns church government. As I said there is no regular scale. There might be something approximating a regular standard in a church whose form of government allows all the churches of a large area to come under the control of one man, or of a select body of men. That man, or body of men, might arrange a scale, or have one that they themselves understood, and if they had control of the men occupying those pulpits at the same time, they could move those preachers up or down the ladder as seemed to them good. Now this is true with the Methodist Church and of other churches that have a similar form of church government. In the Methodist Church and in the Episcopal Church, as well as in the Catholic Church, and in a number of others, this form of government, which may be called a hierarchy, prevails. Those churches can regularly promote one from a lay-member through all the processes to be a bishop finally. But not so with us. The Church of Christ has a different form of church government. It believes that all the many congregations dotting the land should be absolutely independent and free from each other, each having the right, which none might contravene, of determining its own affairs. On this point we are like the Baptists and some others. Only there remains yet a difference. They affect by associations some larger problems, and exercise such power through those associations that it almost amounts to the actions of

an hierarchy. We are more independent in our local church life than any church to which my acquaintance extends."

"Then how do you do missionary work? Or do you not undertake missionary work?" she asked.

"Yes. We do so without organization. We do so only on the basis of co-operation. Voluntary, from the power that inheres in each local church, controlled by its officers, who are elders and deacons, two, or a dozen, or fifty churches may undertake to support the same missionary program. We do missionary work in many foreign lands—including South America, China, the Hawaiian Islands, Japan, India, Africa, and so on. We have no over-head. We do not have a number of high salaried men and women who must be supported by the churches in their missionary programs. We save to the workers in foreign fields every penny that is intended for them."

"I see," she said. "But I still do not understand how you would get a thing started. Who starts it?"

"In this day of communication of ideas, where knowledge runs to and fro, having also a medium through a number of religious journals that are independent ventures in journalism, having in operation a number of highly skilled men who are known as evangelists (you call them general evangelists, I think), it is no trouble to get started all that the churches maintain. You see, a church through its officers, may recommend and send to a foreign field one of its own members that it believes specially fit for the work. Then the elders of that church can enter the columns of the religious press, make their plans known and ask for co-operation on the part of other churches. In this way they will see to the support of the one they send."

"But suppose," she said, "that they could not get a support—that more would go to the work than could be supported?"

"That is a situation that is automatically controlled by the law of supply and demand. It will take care of itself.

"We have a very effective foreign missionary program, and this is the way it operates, saving thousands of dollars every year.

"But getting back to this question of preachers and the churches in this county. Since each church is free, it can call any man that it wants to preach for it. That is why I am allowed to be considered by this church in Andover.

"Besides all this," he said, "we believe that we are following rigidly the pattern of the churches and their work, as we read from the pages of the New Testament. And in all matters of faith and practice, it is our claim and our determination as a church to follow the Bible and the Bible only as our guide."

"That sounds all right to me, and sensible enough on every point," she said. "But then I am such a novice in Bible things."

"Just the same, I think you are quite unusual in being interested in these things."

"Apart from a personal interest I might not be," she answered. "And so that is why you find me as ready a student as I may appear to be."

"You will never find one who is more eager to teach—and I might add that this is also true because of a personal interest," he said. "But I don't want to appear to instruct toward narrow sectarianism nor into the tenets of a sect. I had rather be an instructor, as was our Lord, unto everlasting life. You will see

from this that I do not relish the idea of proselyting into a small body of people built after some man-made doctrines. I want always to call attention back to the Bible."

The conversation lagged.

"Do you sing? I mean the popular songs," she added.

"Very indifferently," he said.

"Come and let's try some new songs I have," she said, as she led the way to the piano.

That evening when he left Peter promised her that he would write her regularly the developments in the direction of his going to the city of Andover. And she promised him that she would let him know whether she would have her plans worked out to go there for school in the fall.

CHAPTER VII

Eloise Corbyn's heart was aching to see Peter. She was in his home city visiting a friend whom she had met at college. But Peter was away engaged in protracted meetings. She had had a letter from him before she left Goodnow, but she had not written him she expected to visit her friend in Balmoreck. Hence, while she knew his whereabouts, he did not know hers.

While she was in his home city she did some private "sleuthing." Not exactly that either, for she was too honorable for ignoble methods of acquiring information concerning Peter. But she had no introduction to the members of his family, or his immediate friends, and her curiosity did strongly incline her to know more about him and his. And this is an explanation of why she drove by the Finwick home on Rosemere Court. It was a beautiful, and home-like place. Not ornate, nor showy, it nevertheless showed plainly good taste and a lack of pecuniary limitations. It could not have been greatly deprived and have looked as it did. It showed that the family who lived there lived in comparative opulence. They were on "easy street," so to speak. The house was a two-story building made of stone. It had a broad, roomy piazza with a porte cochere extending over the driveway. A stone facade was raised a few feet on the side opposite the house. A weeping willow stood waving its plume-like branches in the soughing wind. Two tall oak trees were also on the expanse of ground about the house. The ground sloped away to the street. The juxtaposition of the lawn and the sidewalk was only hindered by a stone balustrade some two feet in

height and that bore at regular intervals jagged peaks of stone set perpendicular. Over this ran close-clinging vines. There was a home-likeness about the place. Stone houses have a different way of affecting one. Some piles of stone, although fashioned into a house, can be very forbidding. Others possess one with the feeling of something strange and gloomy, eerie, or ghostly. In fact, this feeling, or the feeling of hospitality, which another architectural pile may make, does not lie, per se, in the stone, but in the combination of it with the ground, the artistic accomplishment as a whole.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage"

is language conceived from this thought. And so the feeling garnered from viewing a scene may vary according to the combination. This strange, subtle world of spirit that broods over all, this vast mystery of time and space and circumstances, of combination and arrangement, lending a pensiveness to the human heart, for whom the world of mystery is too much, does always amaze, enthrall, mystify and fill with rapture.

The subtle welcome of the Finwick home seemed to beckon Eloise Corbyn. Even the waving ferns on the balustraded piazza seemed to wave her a welcome. And yet she did not know the family. But knowing Peter, she imagined him entering the broad entrance, sitting on the wide porch, and she wondered in what corner of the building his room was.

As Ruth Satterfield and she motored toward the business section a certain rashness seized Eloise. "Go by the telegraph office and send him a wire," something kept saying in her inner consciousness. "He

does not know you are here. Perhaps he will arrange, or can arrange to come home for a few days while you are here. He is not more than one hundred and fifty miles away." When once this subtle voice had spoken to her consciousness she could not forget it.

"Go by the telegraph office, Ruth?" she said, in turn.

"Going to wire home?"

"No. I am going to wire my preacher."

"Eloise!"

"What of it?"

"You must be crazy about him. First you want to drive by his home, having looked the number up in the directory, then you demand to go right straight to the telegraph office.

"But all the same, I am anxious to see this paragon of all the virtues, this preacher, this Lothario all in one. Hope he comes home when he gets your wire."

"That's just what I am hoping, and that is what causes me to want to send the wire. I guess I am being rather bold. But he doesn't know I am here, and if he learns later that I came to his home town and did not let him know, he'll think I should have let him know, won't he? So it will be better to let him know now."

137 L 1 BALMORECK 130 P
PETER FINWICK
FANE
AM VISITING 351 STONELEIGH STOP
WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU
ELOISE CORBYN

Peter Finwick read the message. He cogitated upon it. And that night he announced that the meeting would come to a close on Wednesday night. That would be the expiration of a ten-day period and that

was long enough for the meeting. He wanted a few days rest before going on to his next engagement. While some of the brethren wanted him to stay a few days longer, they saw that to entreat was useless. They could not quite understand the sudden decision to bring the revival to a close. But Peter persuaded himself that he had done about all that he could anyway. Audiences were small, despite the strong efforts he made. Nor could he contrive any way to increase them very much. He had come to the decision that the condition of the church had driven the world away from it. It had been a divided and rent church. The members had been at one another's throats. The world about knew of the disturbance, and the strongest preacher could not have accomplished very much. So Peter felt. He felt that he had done his best—and, while duty may have been a little neglected, still something else called him. He yielded.

Peter wired Miss Corbyn that he would arrive at Union Station Thursday morning at ten o'clock.

All eager and expectant she was there to meet him. What a vision of loveliness she was to his eyes! It was plain that he would have to do something in regard to this girl. She was disconcerting him utterly. Strange that he should have to make calculations in his life of service that would be broad enough to take her in. He had come to the point where he could not help it. He had met his fate.

It mattered not to him, nor to her, that any one saw their greeting. They were no longer just friends.

Ruth Satterfield was ignored. But her heart palpitated just a little faster at their greeting. And then she was introduced.

"Now I am taking you right out to the house to meet my mother," Peter said to Miss Corbyn.

"All right," she agreed. "We have been out driving several times. We have passed your house, and I have wanted to walk right in and meet her," Eloise said.

"I'll take you out in my car," Miss Satterfield said. "And while I would like to meet your mother, Mr. Finwick, I have an engagement, and so I'll run along and come back for Eloise later."

"We'll be sorry to have you run right on. Wish you could go in," Peter said.

"I've a feeling that Eloise wants you all to herself," Miss Satterfield said.

"Correct, my dear," her friend said with animation, while a bloom of red rose was in her cheeks.

"Why, Peter," Mrs. Finwick said as she met Peter at the door. "I was not looking for you."

"I am sure you were not, Mother. But I came home for a few days before going on to my next engagement."

He kissed her and then turned to his friend.

"Mother, this is the girl of whom you have heard me speak so often, Miss Eloise Corbyn. I know you'll love her as much as I do," he said quite frankly.

"He must be wild about you, dear," Mrs. Finwick said as she took Eloise's hand. "I hear about you morning, noon and night when he's home."

"While I do not make the charge, for it would be so incompatible with his calling, I am afraid he has been inclined to say more than he meant," Miss Corbyn replied easily.

"I may have been voluble. Still I have not talked nearly so much as I have thought," he replied.

"You see, Mother, I learned that my friend here was in town visiting a friend, and I rushed home to have a few hours with her—and with you—and with all the rest. That explains my unexpected return."

After they had removed their hats—Mrs. Finwick had insisted upon it in the case of Miss Corbyn—they were seated in the living room, and then Mrs. Finwick asked her son about the protracted meeting which he had just closed.

"Mother, the church was a wretched thing. A spirit of carnality had got possession, and the world knew it. The warring of the members had ruined all their prospects. A year ago when I went there and held a meeting, baptizing a number and getting the church started, it had a wonderful future. It was in highest esteem from every standpoint. First in order, a crank in the church got the church in an uproar over individual communion glasses. They were introduced by some of the good sisters because an old brother had cancer of the mouth. They did not want to drink after him. And so they ordered an individual communion set. This crank, Oliver Sledge, said that was all wrong, that the Bible spoke of "the cup," not cups. He failed to see, could not have seen, that in the Bible such is a metonymy, one thing is put for another. The word cup is used, not really meaning the cup, but the thing which the cup contained, namely, the fruit of the vine, which represents the blood of Christ. But on this colossal ignorance, plus a brazenness which made him a dictator in the matter of his opinion, he managed to get the whole church into an uproar.

"I did not come to an open encounter, publicly, with him. I felt reasonably certain that he could not be convinced, that he was set in his way. So what was the use? But I did try very hard to put a stop to his disastrous work. I took all the leaders, had several individual and then one general meeting with them, counseled them against listening further and

letting the church suffer. They promised me that they would band themselves firmly together and drive right straight ahead. I told them that this was the one and only thing to do. You know, to listen to a crank too far simply makes him uncontrollable. Patience and forbearance with him will only make him worse. He can not stand it. He somehow, constitutionally, seems to understand that every one will think him a crank and that but a few will pay any attention to his cavilling. So when he is listened to too far he gets to raving, almost insane, if not entirely, upon the point. But when his cavilling is ignored, completely, and the work of the church goes right on as though he did not exist, then he slips into his place. He may mouth about it a little, but he accepts it as correct.

"But no crank can receive the proper treatment unless there is some spirit bold enough and that sees clearly enough, to swing the whole church right along as though the crank did not exist. And that is just what this church did not have. It takes a leader to do this sort of a thing. There was no outstanding leader in this church, and hence the disastrous result of the wrangling over the individual communion sets. Churches all over the land suffer from the lack of efficient leaders. And they are literally festooned with cranks. And cranks always speak boldly. There is so very much said about dividing churches, disturbing their peace and hindering their progress by the spirit of cavilling over unimportant issues in the New Testament that it seems all should have sufficient warning. When a weakling is armed with a sword of Goliath, given the courage of a David without his sagacity, and undertakes to make war, he will turn and fight his own army instead of the enemy. That is what is happening in too many instances."

"Did you have any visible results?" asked Mrs. Finwick.

"A few children from the families of the congregation, who naturally would not be so deeply affected by the quarrels of their elders, and who would sooner forget, became obedient to the faith. But we did not have a chance to reach out. And a year ago we had such wonderful opportunities. If conditions had remained what they were then numbers would have obeyed the gospel. And just such a thing as this, multiplied by thousands, and stretched over the centuries, is just what has kept the church from converting the world. Therefore, the problems within the church are superior to those with reference to her other-world relationship. I conceive my duty, therefore, to be, to try to retain the church within scriptural bounds, to make it a godly and efficient church, equally as much as to study how to present the facts for primary obedience. In other words, the preaching of faith, repentance, confession and baptism for the remission of sins. The preachers in the church of Christ are well able to present these facts of gospel obedience, but the churches are not able to maintain the standard of New Testament righteousness. Both must be done for progress of the truth.

"And when I come from an experience such as this, my patience is exhausted with those preachers who know only faith, repentance, confession and baptism. We have had both a genius and a penchant for doctrinal preaching, but we have had the understanding of a child in meeting the problems of organization, of the church work. But it gets back to the point from which I started a bit ago. It resolves itself into a question of inefficient leaders."

At this point Mrs. Finwick left the young people

and went back to the kitchen to instruct the cook about luncheon. Left to themselves they lost no time in getting to a discussion of their being associated in the city of Andover in the fall.

"I've practically completed my plans to go there," Miss Corbyn said. "But, of course, I am waiting for a final decision until I learn what your plans are. I have already secured a promise from father that I may," she said.

"I cannot say just yet whether I shall receive this call," Peter confided. "But I hope to be able to say right away now."

Mrs. Finwick soon returned and announced that lunch would be served in a short time.

"I did not mean to stay for lunch, Mrs. Finwick," Miss Corbyn said.

"Now don't be embarrassed about that, my dear. Peter's friends are very welcome, indeed."

"Mother, I had intended to take Elosie (it was the first time he had used her given name like that) down town for lunch," Peter said.

"You can do that tomorrow," Mrs. Finwick said. "I want you both today."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Pinehurst Street Church of Christ in the city of Andover had elements in it. In matters of faith the limited membership, which numbered just under one hundred, were "of one heart and one soul," but in matters of opinion, they were as widely different as human nature is diverse. No two of the leaders could, or did see things alike. The things which they could not see alike, as before said, were not points of doctrine, or what the Divine Record said. They believed in the same form of church government, in the same rule for congregational and individual conduct, the same plan of salvation, the same acts of worship, and they also agreed upon what would be an innovation into that worship of a man-made ordinance. They agreed to speak where the Bible spoke and to be silent where the Bible was silent—but as soon as they got beyond the direct words of Holy Writ they were on grounds of confusion. However, they were not wrangling. In matters of opinion, as they and the great leaders of the Restoration Movement had so often asserted, charity should be practiced. But in faith, things derived from inspiration, there had to be unity. And there was. But while they were not so radically different in their opinions as to have turmoil, they were so different as not to want the same things. And when it came to the selection of a preacher, since the Bible manifestly did not tell them the one to call, they were on grounds of opinion. Therefore, more than one preacher was being considered, and each name being advanced had special adherents.

No one preacher could be called to the Pinehurst

And for a long time, some months, it was not apparent who would be called. Finally, to meet the situation, a time was set aside for final agreement.

Brother Silas Jenkins was championing the call of Peter. Being the most wealthy man in the congregation, and the most adroit he worked out his plans nicely. Although several men had been considered, finally the names dwindled, upon the day of final choice, to three chief contenders. Brother Jenkins had seen to this. It had been a steady, strategic advance that he made upon the complex proposition. By such a little matter as a firm personal friendship with a man whom he had known in his early young manhood in another state, and who only a year previous to this time had moved to Andover, Peter found (although unconscious of it at this time) his whole future course in life directed. So little are we the reputed masters of our craft! So much does circumstance play in the direction of man toward his destiny. And so much does chance do in what one will do or what he will become. A brisk turn of affairs at the right moment, and the whole life course is sent this way or that. A man's heart may devise, but "God directeth his steps."

Peter's closest rival was a better known man than he was. But this man, while better known, was handicapped by the fact that he had a brother-in-law in the congregation who was also an official. He, George Barr, was much beloved, and his wife was a most estimable Christian woman. And it seems that this should have been an asset to Peter's rival, Kenway Lee. Kenway Lee had thought so too, and while he was with a church that was a bit stronger in a slightly smaller city, he thought he saw the fine possibilities in the Pinehurst Street Church in the City of An-

dover. And he had a true eye to the future of this particular church. And a thing which the membership of the Pinehurst Street Church could not know, which Silas Jenkins did not know, and which Kenway Lee was not publishing to the world, was a disturbance in the church of which Brother Lee was minister that threatened to wreck his future at that place. He thought it wise quietly to withdraw from the scene—especially if he could receive a good call. What a peculiar, gratifying triumph that would be over the babblers, his enemies, who disliked him in the church where he was! Preachers are so very human. But they are not more human than the membership of the churches. But the craftiness and foresight of Silas Jenkins obviated the advantage of a brother-in-law in the Pinehurst Street Church. It could be worked both ways. And Silas Jenkins turned it the other way. He said, and with the necessary consideration for the future of the church, that there was danger in the matter of kinsfolk being mixed up in running the affairs of the church. If Kenway Lee should be chosen, he could never be dislodged, even if circumstances should come to warrant, without its being done over the objection of his brother-in-law, and any clique he might stir up. Therefore, danger lurked in securing a man for the work who would bring in family affairs. Family affairs were bad enough when unmixed with church affairs. Together, they might become unspeakably bad. Some of the more sober heads, judiciously approached, saw the point.

The other man, who was only a third, and not uncomfortably close in the running, was Todd Weatherspoon. He was more on the evangelistic order, and he did not particularly care for the place. He would have only used it because of its good location in a good city for the winter and spring months. He had

no desire to be tied down to the weighty responsibility of constantly administering to the spiritually weak. He was not the type who could, or would, preach the gospel in the homes and on the streets to the weak members. If he could not address them in a body in the meeting house at given times, he would not reach them at all. That way of teaching of the Apostle Paul, which was done "publicly and privately, night and day," covered too much ground for him. He only wanted to do it publicly. He had no provision made for visiting the sick, the careless, the diffident. But he would have preached able sermons, no doubt. But those members of the Pinehurst Street Church whom he had baptized and who had known him well, stopping only to study his great sermons in revivals, were strong boosters for Todd Weatherspoon. They were superficial observers. They had never made a study of the church at work. They knew practically nothing about that. Just because they had heard Brother Weatherspoon in some great meetings they decided that he was the man. But a few of the leaders in the Pinehurst Street Church had studied the problem. They realized that there are preachers, and preachers. Good, bad and indifferent. Good organizers, strong workers in visitation, wonderful pulpiteers. Preachers and preachers. But not all possess all the qualities that insure success under every emergency. Some fit certain situations, and some do not.

But a thing that had to be offset in the case of Brother Todd Weatherspoon, when considered for the Pinehurst Street Church, was the fact that he had just held a meeting in the late spring for that church. And he had swept a lot of the weak hero-worshippers off their feet. It was that element, too, that set up a clamour for his call. And one of the elders was in the number. It took time for this sentiment to subside.

And Silas Jenkins worked toward allaying it. He knew it had to be done gradually. But he was convinced that while Todd Weatherspoon was a fine man, and a great preacher, he would not meet the needs of that church as a "located man." Silas Jenkins had studied the problem of preachers. He had given very earnest attention to the church at work. He knew that if the subject had been raised for immediate decision at the close, or near the close of the Weatherspoon meeting, the decision would have been for Todd Weatherspoon, and only fairly profitable for the church. And at the end of a few months the old problem would be up again. And even if Brother Weatherspoon would return in the fall again, his long absence would allow the weak members, and the lightly interested strangers to drift away.

"So many churches are cursed with this immediate blindness," Silas Jenkins said to one of the deacons, Royal Davis, one day. "They are carried away by the visiting evangelist. They think, being all heated up, and observing the preacher at his very best, 'Oh, if we had this preacher all the time we could take this whole country for Christ.' I also thought that about a great preacher one time. I was carried away. And he, unwise beyond what one would have thought—for while the members will constantly do that sort of thing, it does look like the great evangelistic preachers would learn better—became a dud, as impossible as it did seem. He was a temperamentalist. When he was up in the clouds, a little boosting would keep him there. But if he started a meeting in the cellar, he had just about as well close it and go home, for he would remain in the cellar. Everything and everybody would be out of tune. The whole world was going to the bow-wows.

"Well, at this particular time, when he was in the

clouds, we extended him a call. He accepted. He was almost as whimsical as a child. About six weeks in the town saw his finish as a masterful leader. He was only a leader when his soul was fired. And it was usually fired in the pulpit. The humdrum of life was too much for him. Why he ever accepted the call in the first place was more than I could see.

"I am sure that Brother Weatherspoon is different in temperment. Still, he is not the type of man this church needs, as I see it. We want a steady, sure-fire fellow. One who can bide his time, 'wait and murmur not.' Who can keep his courage and confidence if things seem to be going backward for a short time. One who can keep his head—and his tongue—under adverse circumstances. And I believe that Peter Finwick can do this. I am advancing his name for more reasons than one. Any church at work is a complicated thing. It is an infinite process of adjustment to new situations. We want a will that will not break nor bend too far. But one that will bend, yield a little, while remaining firm. It makes me think of the story of the storm as it affected the stiff, mature buckwheat, as told in one of Anderson's tales. The buckwheat would not bend when the storm struck it. But it was all broken down. While hard by stood a willow tree. It swayed in the wind, while remaining rooted at the same place. It did give, remain, and not break. It thrived after the storm."

"While your conversation is enlightening on this preacher question, Brother Jenkins, you don't have to argue with me. I see this thing exactly as you do," Royal Davis said.

When the day finally came for the decision for a preacher for the Pinehurst Street Church Silas Jenkins was given the opportunity of putting the question.

He was very glad of the opportunity, too. He first discussed the needs of the church, very briefly, and succintly. Then he made a rousing speech and a fine introduction of the name of Peter Finwick. He deliberately, after long study, decided to put Peter's name first. He also sought, by much study and preparation for his remarks, to put the proposition so that he could get the desired result. He knew that the way of advancing a thing has much to do. Only slightly less ardently, for too decided a way of doing it would be detected, he advanced the name of Kenway Lee. And then the name of Todd Weatherspoon. He had to put all three names. This decision had been reached by the elders and deacons. They wanted the congregation to have a voice in the selection of the preacher.

A large number of the congregation, either because they did not know the respective preachers, or because they did not care to participate in the proceedings, failed to voice any special desires. So only fourteen leading members of the congregation expressed themselves for the first name, Peter Finwick. Eleven expressed themselves as favoring Kenway Lee and four (how the list had dwindled from the days of his meeting!) for Todd Weatherspoon. And so it was done. Silas Jenkins announced that Brother Peter Finwick would be notified immediately of the decision, and the call of the congregation.

Not many thought of the strategy of Silas Jenkins. And none would impugn his motives. But one specially strong friend of Todd Weatherspoon said to a few of the members that if the name of another had been advanced with the same fervor as the name of Peter Fenwick that that name would have been chosen.

Peter arrived on the ground of his new field of

labor with a happy anticipation. The spirit of youth is hard to dim.

One good sister, who, by the way, did not mean to offend Peter, was bold enough, on the first opportunity presenting itself, to tell Peter though that she did not want him to think it an especial honor to be called to the church when he could muster only fourteen votes.

"It seems, Sister Harris, from the number who expressed themselves, that no preacher is very popular with this church," Peter said. "Seeing this is the case, I have in mind undertaking to raise their interest, however difficult that may be. And I had just as soon undertake it as to have any other preacher to do it. You see, I am not sensitive. Especially since I was the 'favored' one, even if that favor was not great. Any qualms, or sensitiveness that I might personally feel will be laid aside in the interest of the broader work of my Master."

"I did not mean to intimate that it is a disgrace to accept the work on the kind of call you had," Sister Harris replied. "And I'll admit that you put it about right. My heart and hand are with you. But I just did not know whether any one had troubled to tell you all the facts."

"Yes. I have been told," Peter said. "And you will do me a favor if you will always be equally frank. You know that some folks are afraid to tell the whole truth, for fear they will offend somebody. But I'll say right now that if I am kept posted on all conditions and currents that are stirred up or fanned in the congregation, then I'll always have a chance to meet the problems that may arise. But if I am kept in ignorance of them until a serious condition prevails,

then I am afraid that my opportunity of doing good will be greatly limited. And I am going to ask you always to be frank with me, and to tell me what may come up in the congregation. I am one preacher who wants to be informed. Not to intermeddle, for a lot of things about which I may hear I'll pay no attention. I know one misguided preacher who meddles into everything he hears about. And he makes things worse. But there are things that have to have attention, you know. To such matters as should have attention I wish to turn my thoughts. And I don't want to be kept in the dark. So I am counting on you."

"I'll help you in the work in this way, Brother Finwick," Sister Harris said.

And she remained true to her word, as future events showed.

CHAPTER IX.

The church situation in Andover was peculiar to itself. But as for that matter, the church situation in every city is peculiar to that city. It is sort of like it is with human beings. There may be a general similarity. But there will also be some points of dissimilarity.

The growth of a city is a factor in the life of churches, whether they be according to the Book, or largely after the ways of men. The wisest of builders and realtors sometimes miss the direction of a thriving city's advancement. And they prosper or fail to prosper as they guess aright. And the same thing is true of those who plan for successful churches. In other words, a part of it happens beyond the control or guess of men or groups of men. But all and in all there are reasons. While there may be an element of chance so far as some individuals and some groups are concerned, there are basic laws that control. They may not lie on the surface, and they may be so stretched over time that one fails to grasp them, but they are there. Sometimes real estate men and promoters anticipate a growth in a given direction, and they advance prices to such a point that things change on them before they know it. Hunting cheaper grounds, builders and home-maker go away from them. But when a wise promoter, studying the growth of a city, gets a set of conditions over which a thriving city cannot pass, gets a tract of land that must be taken in, inevitably almost, then he can become a millionaire. There are a few such in each city.

No one foresaw the direction of the growth of Andover far in advance nor could foresee the indus-

tries that would make it great in three short decades.

Andover was an industrial city. Its great steel plants belched forth streams of fire. In the night these shooting tongues of flames, emitted by tall smoke-stacks made lurid the sky. Sweating, grimy men, in the bowels of these great industrial plants, half naked, ground out methodically thousands of miles of shining rails for railroads. How anything so well designed could come from such a hell of flame, making possible the vaster comforts of an industrial era, the designing brain of a master of his line could tell. To novices these belching volcanoes were mysteries, great, fascinating. Steel frame-work for sky-scrapers, steel frame-work for giant bridges that should span roaring torrents of water, frame-work for myriads of the extraordinary projects of man. Cooperages. Great manufacturing plants. Mills running millions of spools that milady should be well clothed. Net and maze of streets. Clanging trollies. Hooting horns. Buzzing elevators. Shouting newsboys. And thousands of men and women bent very urgently upon ends. This was Andover, thriving, pulsating city of a quarter of a million souls.

And in this city several Churches of Christ. Their lives bound up in the life of the city. Strangely related to industry, to these steel elephants, to these clanging trollies, to these humming shuttles, to these buzzing elevators.

Nobody foresaw what would happen in the growth of Andover through the suburb of Avalon Heights. The above-mentioned industries did almost unbelieveable things. The tide of population follows employment. A large part of the population follows industries. Andover grew by leaps and bounds. Great plants, employing hundreds and thousands of men

went in one right after another. People hunting work moved to Andover from long distances and from many cities and villages. These people had to be housed, fed and clothed. They were paid to work in the industrial plants. They could afford to buy homes, automobiles, food and clothing.

Builders built homes. Grocers put in stores. Druggists hunted new corners in fast growing suburbs. Sewer pipes were laid. Water mains extended. Paving companies put down asphalt and concrete. Through Andover one main street, two blocks from Pinehurst, on which was located the church with which Peter worked, became a great business street. One could buy anything he wanted there from a clothes pin to a suit of clothes, from a screw driver to an automobile. The tide of population had just begun to flow strongly through the suburb known as Avalon Heights when Peter was called there. The life of the Pinehurst Street Church of Christ depended on this flow of the population, and on the growth of Andover generally.

Certainly the preachers of the Church of Christ in Andover, of whom there were three working regularly with churches counting one who also worked on a daily newspaper for the major part of his support betimes (which was most of the time), could not foresee, in advance, this turn in the city's growth. It was a turn. It had been going southward. Now it began to go northward. Eastward it had run up against a long mountain. West the industrial section, filled with broken ground, a labyrinth of tracks and rambling manufacturing plants, steel mills, et cetera, stopped the growth. Distant suburbs, beyond the industrial section, or beyond the mountain on the east, would have to be opened, or inevitably the popu-

lation would go north and south. It suddenly chose to go north. And in this set of conditions Peter's work prospered. He found a gold mine, speaking figuratively, for the growth of the Pinehurst Street Church. He was in the "swim."

Within five years after Peter accepted a call to the Pinehurst Street Church it became the strongest in the city, and one of the strongest in all the land. The reasons were varied. Some of them have been hinted at in the growth of the city. But a power for leadership, vested in two men in the Pinehurst Street Church was also elemental. Those two men were Peter, first and foremost, because he gave his whole life to it, and in the second place Silas Jenkins. They worked hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder. They had a perfect understanding of motives and sentiments, and of judgment, too, in all problems. They had a beautiful friendship, a David-and-Jonathan sort of friendship.

A dominant personality, Peter planned on such proportions as to accommodate, in a large program, the elements of growth as they should manifest themselves. His vision grew in proportion to the general development of which the life of the Pinehurst Street Church was a part. Had he failed in this, and not have met the situation, other things would have absorbed the strength that did finally go to the Pinehurst Street Church. While things may be hard to understand, they do not go by chance altogether. Some men are said to be lucky who are also possessed of the ability that makes possible certain ends. There may be an element of luck. But there is also a virile personality.

To those who are unfamiliar with cities, it does not seem possible that there should be so much the community life as there is. Certain little communities

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abound that rarely touch the life of others. Communities are built on various substantial causes. Touched by this community sense was the life of the churches of Christ in Andover. The preachers rarely saw one another. And the memberships of the different congregations knew but a little about one another. In fact, the membership of the Pinehurst Street Church knew little of one another before Peter went there. A motorman on a street car, busy at his work, had but little chance to know the lawyer who occupied offices in a downtown office building. The milk man who left his couch at one-thirty of the clock in the morning, while most folks were asleep, had but little time to know about the clothing salesman who worked from nine in the morning until five-thirty in the afternoon. How Peter built this heterogeneous membership, bound only by a common faith, into one of the most lovable brotherhoods makes a most interesting study that will be detailed somewhat in due time. The methods he employed, the means he used. Publicity features of the work. Psychological use of means. Employment of talents. Organizing. Working of members.

The euphonious name of the church located on an edge of the industrial section did not sound at all like the little, smoke-blackened building looked. Western Parkway Church of Christ. A few blocks east of that point this street was a parkway, like Brooklyn's great parkway. But industries had crowded it down until it was a very narrow, rough, dirty street that ended abruptly one block west of the Western Parkway Church of Christ building.

The membership of this church was small. There were about sixty members. They were all residents of that section—the mill section. They were poor

people. A sort of a do-not-care people. But they were good. They meant no man harm. And paid their debts. They were day laborers. They were shiftless. Easily satisfied. Unambitious.

The young brother who served this church served almost for a song. He depended on the free-will offerings. They were never large. And his membership were very fond of him. They would have laid down their necks for him. And he knew they would. He had started the work there. He nurtured it with a great care. They came to depend on him as one does on his hand. But, like the hand again, they knew not how much they did depend on him until he fell sick.

This young man, tall, spare, a deep sincerity apparent in his honest brown eyes, was the newspaper preacher, above referred to. His name was David Welsh. David was like an old black horse his father had on the farm when David was growing up. Old Dan was an honest horse. If he had been hitched to a derailed steam engine; he would have pulled every time he was told to. And that was the way it was with David Welsh. He always pulled. He was steady, sure-fire. He had never fired the Western Parkway Church with any great zeal. But he had made himself indispensable. And it had not been calculated. It was simply the character of the man at work. It was natural.

No one in the Western Parkway Church ever thought of changing preachers. David Welsh was a fixture. And the honest mill-hands and factory workers and steel workers were satisfied with him.

David Welsh sawed wood. He took his own course. He did not interfere with others. He did not intermeddle. But he was always at his post of duty.

Brother David Welsh did not hold a very respons-

ible position with the "Daily Examiner." But on the paper, too, he was a fixture. He found the place and the work that he suited, and he was not slated for a change.

If David Welsh had been so unfortunate as to have received a call from the Pinehurst Street Church, he would have failed miserably. He would have gained more prominence, for a few days. And then he would have had to "take the gate." The exactions of a different work, harder, requiring an active, energetic personality, would have been the wrong work for him.

In the eastern part of the city of Andover, or the central eastern, was located the Hanford Street Church of Christ. A very different type man was preaching for this church. Avery Sutton was approaching middle age. He had a large experience. He had seen service in several different cities. Not a dominant personality, yet his reputation, and his knowledge, ground out of the hard school of experience, prepared him to meet most problems. He met them with no brilliance, but with assurance. And this gave him long life in the good graces of his people. He was the author of two notable pieces of literature dealing with the Restoration Movement.

Some folks thought he was desultory, dull in his preaching. His sentences and paragraphs were musty, so to speak. They smelled of the old volumes of his library, which was one of the best private libraries in the country. His speech lacked "pep" and "punch." He appealed to the older, more thoughtful folk. His appeal was not great to the young, who wanted action. But his weight and experience made possible a longevity in the Hanford Street pulpit. Avery Sutton had lost the fire of youth. He had also lost its delusions. He had come to the point where he could be satisfied

with a regular, routine course in life, of ordinary achievement.

The Hanford Street church building was a substantial one of brick and concrete. It was modern, and designed for service. It was accessible, and was the oldest in the city of the Churches of Christ. And the membership of this church was the most substantial and the most numerous. It boasted some men of wealth. It had some socially prominent folk.

It usually takes a long time to grow a church like the Hanford Street Church. And only the broader, more experienced men, men of reputation, occupy the pulpits of such churches, unless some extraordinary condition breaks the rule.

While Brother Avery Sutton did not appeal very much to the young people, it is not to be thought that he did not have them in the Hanford Street Church, for they stayed there, just by sheer force of the strong, solid life of the church that had been so many years in growing. They belonged to the "best families" in the Church of Christ in Andover. They held together and had a peculiarly well-planned social life. And it also takes time to grow a group of such young folk.

The congregation in the southern part of the city of Andover was a yet different sort of congregation, and it also had a very different sort of preacher.

There was a solid element in this congregation who directed its affairs with a certain confidence. And they brooked no outside interference. The preacher was just the preacher. He visited, served, and ran errands. But he could never raise his voice in authority. But that doesn't mean he did not try to. He just failed to impress the weight of his feeble personality. He was a nervous, uncertain man. And

yet he did have some power. He possessed a fine power of ingratiation. And he was very ambitious for the South Sterrett Street Church of Christ. He wanted to rank with the Hanford Street Church. But this man had better be named. He certainly had a name, and one not known in just a limited section. He had acquired a reputation also, as well as his fellow-minister, and rival. His name was Anthony Jordan.

But more of Anthony Jordan and the other preachers of Andover in a proper connection. Peter Finwick had to deal with these preachers and their congregations in some measures and in some ways. But we shall see those things develop through Peter's ministry in Andover.

No man can be a law unto himself. "No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself." And no preacher in a city such as Andover, where there are several congregations of like faith, can live entirely to himself.

CHAPTER X.

It was a deep-seated satisfaction to Peter Finwick for him just to know that Eloise Corbyn was coming to the city of Andover for the school year. He reached Andover only a short time before she did. He was hardly acquainted with the leaders of the Pinehurst Street Church, and had not anything like got round to visit the whole membership of the church before she came.

There was no formal installing of the new preacher. But there was a tenseness in the whole membership before that first service. The young preacher got away to a good start. He was a born mixer. Before the service began on the first Sunday night, he met and greeted a large number of the congregation. And at the close of the service he reached the main entrance and exit before the congregation started to leaving and shook hands with each and all. No one was allowed to pass without doing this.

A general friendliness developed, and a warm place for Peter almost before he knew it.

Avery Sutton had not bestirred himself to meet Pinehurst's new preacher. Nor would he. And yet there was no "high-hatting." He was interested in the success of the young man, but he was very busy in his studies, and he had some special papers to prepare for some of the religious journals, and besides he had a heavy work in keeping in touch with his people. But Anthony Jordan and David Welsh, at the invitation extended them by Silas Jenkins, met the train when Peter arrived. They were very kind to him.

But when these things had occurred, and Peter was made conscious that the day had actually approached for the arrival of Eloise Corbyn he could hardly contain himself.

Pinehurst's new minister (the term is here used in the sense of servant, and has no official significance, let it be said for the benefit of those who may question) was a-foot. While his father had plenty, and could have supplied him, Peter disdained to take anything from his father more than the necessary educational needs to which he had put his father. He wanted to go to the world making his own way.

"If there is anything you need, my boy, feel perfectly free to make your wants known," Peter's father said to him when he left for Andover.

"If I get in a tight place, Dad, I'll call on you," he had said then, and there the matter rested.

But while Pinehurst's new minister was a-foot, he had a very splendid wardrobe. There was one thing about Peter Finwick. He dressed the part. He was not flashy, or gaudy, but he was always immaculately dressed, tailored in effect. One was immediately impressed with his neat appearance. One always was. Peter believed that one should dress and look the part. He believed that clothes help to make the man —with the general public!

Peter decided that he would rather walk to the station. It was the day for Eloise's arrival. The depot was more than a mile away. To get to it from where he lived (again he was with an elderly couple, and lived only two blocks from the Pinehurst Street meeting house), he would have to take a car down to the center of town, and then transfer to reach Union

Station. Or else call a taxi. He chose to walk. The weather was not fair. Rain threatened. A heavy mist was in the air. But Peter's spirits were not dampened by the weather. He was as light-hearted as a mocking bird on a moon-light night in mid-summer.

What a charming creature she was. Peter saw her through the iron picketed fence that shut off the tracks from the main concourse, just beyond the main waiting room. A red-cap had her bags. She was evidently looking for some one. Then she caught sight of him and raised her hand in greeting before she reached the gate. She swung along briskly. She walked with grace and ease. Her dark tailored suit and brown hat, almost a turban, were certainly becoming. Her skirt struck just at the knees. How trim her ankles were! Even if Peter was a preacher he was not blind. And he was not unimpressionable.

"Are you glad to see me, dear?" she asked, a little tremulously.

"What a question!" he replied. "I have been looking forward to this day with great eagerness. And now we are both here."

The red-cap had paused to rest. Their greeting over, Peter turned to the red-cap and told him to take the bags to a taxicab stand on the opposite side of the waiting room. Thither they went.

"I was sort of looking for your mother to be with you," Peter said, as they walked along.

"She came over last week and made all arrangements for me," Miss Corbyn said. "She and my father had a trip planned for this week, and she wanted to get this all out of the way so that she might go with Father."

"I see," Peter said.

The red-cap hailed a taxi, placed the bags inside, Peter tipped him, they entered and were off.

"What address, please?" the taxi driver asked.

"Seven hundred thirteen Idelwild Street," Miss Corbyn instructed.

Peter did an un-preacher-like thing, perhaps, but a very human one. He had an affectionate nature and —— But——

"And you are going to Patmont University instead of Waverly College," Peter said by way of starting a conversation. She had written him this very thing.

"Yes. It will suit me better. But I had to prevail upon mother for this privilege. She thought the more exclusive Waverly College would be better—safer, you know."

Peter ran over in his mind what a member of the Pinehurst Street congregation had told him. This brother was a window-shade man for a furniture store down town. Peter had casually said something to this brother one day about Waverly College. It was on his mind in connection with Miss Corbyn.

"Pardon me, Brother Finwick," this man with the very common name of John Smith had said at that time. "But I am a window-shade man. You speak of the high character of this Waverly College. It is supposed to be a tender nursery for virtue, but, believe me, it is no such thing. I was sent over to one of the dormitories last year to see about a lot of window shades. And what I saw there! One girl, who had on just a little more than when God made her, pranced about before me. I went to her door and knocked. She said to come in. When she saw who it was it made no difference. She knew she had a

pretty form. What difference did it make? Believe me, a lot of the girls who go there, girls from swell homes, don't care. I don't think much of the morals of Waverly College. It is exclusive. But what of it? I would not want a girl of mine to be associated with such 'swells'."

Peter recalled this now when Miss Corbyn spoke of the safer side of Waverly College.

"But I preferred Patmont University," Miss Corbyn continued. "I like a co-educational institution. I am not especially fond of a girls' college these days. The more exclusive ones have so many things going on in their dormitories that I don't like. Nearly all the girls smoke, and not a few drink. I don't like things like that. I guess I am a bit old-fashioned," she concluded.

"And that is the reason I like you. No that is not the word. That is the reason I am crazy about you," Peter said.

"I am going to board in a private home. Mother investigated thoroughly before she agreed to take the place for me. There are no boys or men about. A widow, elderly and very stern, I have heard, runs the place, and she only takes a few of the choicest girls to board. I think I am going to like the place. And then, too, I shall have the privilege of going about pretty much as though I were at home. This privilege has been granted me. I made it plain, through Mother, of course, that I shall go to church and Sunday school every Sunday. And I can have callers at times until ten o'clock at night. Mrs. Chisholm will not permit a caller to stay later."

"I am glad to get the 'lay of the ground'," Peter said.

There was a pause.

"Now tell me how you like your church," she said. Peter wanted to correct her, to tell her that he had no church, but he did not wish to offend her, with her present imperfect knowledge of the peculiar, Biblical phraseology employed by members of the Church of Christ, who would only speak of Bible things in Bible names, and thought it was the speech of Ashdod to use the talk of the denominations about them. He knew that she had always been accustomed to the teaching that "it makes no difference, there is nothing in a name anyway." But he certainly thought there was something in a name. He believed that the church of the New Testament ought to be spoken of only in terms of the New Testament. He did not believe in speaking of "your" church, or "our" church. No one was supposed to have a church except the Lord Jesus Christ. But he passed the point for the time being, and answered her near-query.

"Just the finest kind of way," he assured her. "It is a very splendid little church. And I believe it holds a great future. The members are mostly just plain, middle-class people, but they are good, unspoiled, unsophisticated people, deeply religious. They mean their professions of religion. And that is the way I mean the term, too. With them religion is a profession, not merely a confession.

"The buiding is nothing to boast about. It is an insignificant sort of frame building. But we have a good lot, well located. And some of these days we are going to put a great building on that lot.

"You see, the church is young. And it takes time to grow a church, as it does an individual man, or woman."

So Peter spoke of the Pinehurst Street Church. He offered no apologies. He was all praise. The church building was not anything like as good as the Methodist house in which the Reverend Ellis Mobley preached in Goodnow, and the one that Eloise Corbyn had attended all her life, but he made no apologies on that score. Peter had pride, but it was not false pride. He felt like apologizing for some of his brethren, and some congregations. But when he had canvassed a situation and found that the brethren had done the best they could, then he was sensible about it. If others liked what they had done, good. If not, and they wanted to call the brethren "moss-backs," and "narrow," Peter would go on before them with a whole-hearted disregard. He simply would not take their prejudicial talk seriously. He was glad to speak a word for the right. He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, or of those who had obeyed it, even if they were denied some social or pecuniary blessings that others enjoyed.

"I am coming to your church—all the time, nearly," Miss Corbyn said.

"I shall certainly expect you to come, although I know the difference that exists between us."

"But that won't make any difference," she said.

"Now I am going to be perfectly frank with you, my dear. It does make a difference. The very fact that I am interested in a girl who is a member of another church might be a very big disadvantage to me. You see, a preacher is scrutinized more abjectly and thoroughly than almost, if not altogether, any body. Members of the church wonder why he does not interest himself in some of the members of his

own connection. Then I think you will not understand the very exact and very exacting view that we take with reference to the church. While we will freely admit that there are good people in all the churches, yet we will not admit that the churches are all in the right. We believe it to be fundamentally wrong to divide into so many churches, for which there is not the least scintilla of authority in the New Testament. We believe that there ought to be just one church. Therefore, we look with disapproval upon all these churches that wear man-made names, and practice things which we believe the Bible does not authorize. We think that if these churches would throw away all their practices which they cannot prove to be right from the Bible, and cast aside all their man-made names, then the faithful would all become one church again, as no doubt God intended.

"Now I would not wound your feelings for the world. And I am perfectly crazy about you, but I felt, when the subject was broached, that I would have to say these things," he said.

He could tell that this went to her heart. She showed it. And it grieved him. But they were facing a dilemma. He knew it full well. She was not conscious of the extent that the question of difference in view and training affected them. Having the common, denominational view that it makes no difference, just so you are honest, what you do, or to what church you belong, she could not see the subject as so fundamental.

"I'll not come to your church, if—if—"

She began to cry.

"You misunderstand, dear," he said with firmness, despite her tears. "I have said I want you to come.

But I also said that our difference of view does make a difference. It will make a difference when I show plainly to my brethren, as I could not help but do when we are before them, that I care deeply for you. But we can face that. I want you to come. But don't you see, sweetheart, that if we contemplate becoming more to one another than we are now, then the real barrier of our religious difference does show up as a very large thing? And especially since I am a preacher."

"Of course I see your point, Peter. And it was my willingness, since it is vital to you, being a public man, and it is not vital to me—it was my intention to ignore the difference and to put myself as far as possible in line with your views," she said.

"That is a noble purpose, my dear. And I appreciate it very much. But it involves, or might involve, a great deal. You see the barrier to our ultimate happiness. But had you thought of what it would mean to your father and mother?"

"I have thought of all of that," she said.

"But again, I could not permit a sacrifice of your views merely to please me," he said. "I hold that a change in your connection should be motivated by a desire to please God alone. And this motive could only spring from conviction. And so with this view of the matter, I could do nothing more than to urge you to attend services at the Pinehurst Street Church, hear me preach, and try to learn the gospel as I understand it. So you see, dear, that while our difference of view does make a difference, yet it will not prevent our studying together the things of the gospel. In fact, my greatest desire is that you will attend services with us and hear me from time to time on the leading

points of the gospel, the government of the church, the discipline outlined in the Scriptures, and so on. Now be patient with me in my rather strict views, and I'll be equally patient with you," he said.

Arrived at her boarding place, he dismissed the faxicab driver, and took the luggage to the house. But as soon as the bags had been placed he secured Eloise's new telephone number and left.

He was sad-hearted over the necessity of speaking to her as he felt it his duty to do.

She was hurt. He had wounded her tender sensibilities more than she would let him see. A cloud entered her life. She was unhappy for the rest of the day. But that night Peter called her over the telephone and they had a wonderful conversation. She went to bed with her heart singing.

He was a dear fellow. If only he had been a Methodist! Then nothing would have been in the way. But love must hurdle some great barriers. What would the future bring? What would her parents think if they knew her heart?

CHAPTER XI.

On the first Sunday of her attendance at the Pinehurst Street Church, Peter Finwick introduced his little friend from Goodnow, whom he had the pleasure of knowing when he was preaching in that town. He undertook, strove hard, to show only a friendly interest as he introduced, with as much casualness as he could find technique to manage, this little friend. But how proud of her he was! She was beautiful. She would attract attention anywhere. Peter introduced her to a few of the young people, and also to some of the leaders. He turned her over to Mrs. Silas Jenkins, to whom alone he had confided something of his regard for Miss Corbyn. Mrs. Jenkins, a cultured, sensible woman, took Eloise in tow. Thereafter Peter showed her as little attention as he could.

Miss Corbyn inspected as well as being inspected. She studied the congregation. But not with a superciliousness. It was rather with a philosophic, ethnologic and sociologic eye, if one may be permitted. What kinds of creatures were these? What possibilities, latent, or active, did they possess? What part could they have in the social fabric?

But after all it did not matter. Only the preacher mattered. And how he mattered!

There was an underlying consciousness of one fair portion of his audience when Peter rose to speak.

How was he to address the reason and not the heart of this girl? Would that be possible? And yet he did desire earnestly that he might reach her intellect rather than her emotions. He wanted to convince her of the doctrinal correctness of the message he delivered. He felt that he had a great message to

deliver. And so he undertook the weighty theme of the plea, "We will speak where the Bible speaks, and we will be silent where the Bible is silent." He took for his text I Peter 4:11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

"This is a world of system and of order," the preacher said. "Results spring from causes. Cause and effect are recognized as being definitely related in this world of fact and of objective reality. A stimulus must be established before a conclusion.

"The world of theology is not exempt from this universal order. Every church, every group of people, is founded upon some cause. There is a divine causation and there is a human causation in the religious world. The battle is on to determine which is which.

"Opposing the loose practices of the Catholic Church, the abuse of indulgences, the doctrine of works, Martin Luther sought to set aside these and to arrange for every individual soul to approach God only through Christ, separate and apart from the Catholic clergy and the reputed efficacy of the doctrine of works. Lutheranism, and largely Protestantism, are known to the world through the cause which Martin Luther championed. There is cause and effect in the religious world as well as elsewhere.

"But Protestantism, over a long period of time, lost its original purpose and in turn became corrupt with the fetiches and doctrines of men. It was like the traditions of the Jews, which were originally intended to aid in an understanding of the law. Finally those traditions reached the point, as Jesus said, that they nullified the very law they were originally intended to support. And so with Protestantism.

"Having reached that point, there arose a new John the Baptist, whose voice was heard crying in

this new wilderness of party strife and doctrines of men, through which the Bible had been cast aside as a dead letter and inoperative among the people. 'The Bible, and the Bible only, shall be the rule of faith and practice. No guide in matters of religion but the Bible. Any book that is larger than the Bible is too large. Any book that is smaller than the Bible is too small. Any book that is different from the Bible is wrong. And any book that says the same things that the Bible says is unnecessary. Therefore, the Bible and the Bible only shall be the rule of faith and practice. Men and women must not be asked to do anything in the name of Christ which cannot be read from the Bible. But men and women must be urged to do just what is recorded in the Bible.'

"Then this plea, which I am making today, means, definitely, the rejection of all creeds, confessions of faith, all books of prayer, all catechisms as guides in matters of religion. Just the Bible and the Bible only.

"It seems utterly strange that any preacher in this enlightened land, where people are supposed to take the Bible as their guide, should deem it necessary to make such a restatement, to urge such a point of view. But it is strictly necessary. All cannot be united on different books. All cannot be one in Christ, as the Saviour prayed, as long as they think it makes no difference. Therefore, the religious world must have just one guide book, namely, the Bible. And they must follow it.

"They must not add to it or take from it. God condemns adding to His word in no uncertain terms. He said that whosoever should add to the words of the book of this prophecy (John, speaking in Revelation) that God would add to him the plagues written therein. And whosoever should take away from the words of the book of that prophecy that God would

take away His part out of the holy city and from the tree of life. One cannot afford, on peril of eternal death, to meddle with that word. It means just what it says and says just what it means. Therefore, the plea again: Where the Bible speaks we speak, and where the Bible is silent we will be silent. This is our plea. This is the right for our existence. We pledge ourselves to abide by it in all matters of faith and of practice. We'll read you from the sacred pages of inspiration anything that we require you to do. But that is not all. We shall also require you to read to us from the pages of inspiration anything that you ask us to do. What is fair for one is fair for the other. We ask no more than we will grant. And we will grant no more than we ask. Here then, is the line drawn.

"It means, cross hands with me over the Bible. We'll be what it says to be. We'll do what it says to do. We'll be members of the church that we read about in its pages and of no other. We'll wear the names it contains. We'll not wear the names of men's devising. The name of no man is good enough. It is sinful to dishonor God and His Blessed Son by wearing another. We'll wear the name of Christ and be called Christians, as the disciples were first called at Antioch (Acts 11:26).

"If all will wear the same name, be the same thing, and do the same things, it is our contention that then divisions will automatically cease to disturb the Christian world.

"We must respect the silence of the Bible as well as its utterances. God knew how to say what he wanted said. He left off where He wanted to leave off. To disrespect His silence and to keep on speaking and commanding men after He has ceased is to fail to respect His word equally as much as to dis-

regard what it has said. It took as much wisdom to withhold from the world what it did not need as to give to the world what it did need. Therefore, even the silence of God must be respected. And God has also said so: 'Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not (does not remain, or stop where God has stopped) in the doctrine of Christ hath not God.' (II John, ninth verse.)"

Then Peter divided his sermon into nine separate points, for greater clarity and elaboration.

1. The Scripturalness of the plea.
2. Its reasonableness.
3. Its simplicity.
4. Its completeness.
5. Its unity, the possibility for all to be united according to it.
6. Its consistency. It rang true. It caused no contradictions.
7. Its conservativeness. It was safe, sure, solid.
8. But it was liberal, liberal enough. It was all one could want.
9. It was non-sectarian. One could follow it, be just a Christian, and not be a member of any denomination. If one could, then all could. And therefore it was undenominational. And it was doubtless the thing that God intended when He revealed His Son's religion. Peter urged this plea with all his might.

It was very enlightening to Eloise Corbyn. She had never heard anything like it before. Her native good sense, her intelligence, and her lack of prejudice showed her at once the correctness of the sermon that Peter preached.

But the next Sunday the preacher fit her case equally as well. He not only taught her, but seeming to come right to the point again he took as his text: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. He that loveth son or daughter

more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

"You can't serve God for another," said Peter. "You cannot serve God for father or mother. Every soul to his master must stand or fall. You cannot serve God through the eyes of a husband or a sweetheart. Just Christ for Christ's own sweet sake, or not Christ at all. Just the soul and God. No one must obstruct your line of vision, or be allowed to dictate to you your religious duty. Christ and Christ only can say.

"How hard it is to sweep aside all that our loved ones hold, and to disregard what they may hold sacred! But in case one learns he has a duty to which his loved ones have never been put, whose eyes have never seen, it becomes his duty to do that very thing. It does not differ if some may scoff. If it is from God, then one must do it.

"So many of us are what we are because of our training. We are what we are that we may be like our parents. We are afraid to defy them through a superior love of Christ. Or, having an especial weakness in that line, we cannot bear to pain them by being or becoming what they are not! And so, from various angles we are restrained from taking Christ into the innermost soul. We deny him that entrance that we may hold our loved ones instead! But remember, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me!'

"Independent action, action prompted by one alone, at least, and that one Christ, and not any other being in all the universe, is a positive demand for the soul to find salvation from all sins.

"But let me take a hypothetical case: Brother A is a good man. His old mother is a member of a

church about which you cannot read in the Bible, search it as much as you will. She wears a name that you cannot find in the Bible. Brother A becomes convinced that he has some light that she did not have. What will he do? Say now, that he lets her slip into her grave and he does not change his relationship through his more advanced knowledge. Will he be untrue to the memory of that mother if he now turns to obey Christ in some positive commands? Certainly not. He will honor her. If she had had the information that he has, would she not have turned into obedience long before? But some are held back for just such reasons. Ah, beloved, that must not be!

"If the past generation did the best it could with the light it had, the new generation should also accept the light in divine things offered to it. We gladly do that in matters of the mechanical sciences. We are glad to accept all modern methods in making life more livable. And we do not think we dishonor the memories of our parents, but in religion we must have a different standard! But this is a prejudicial way of meeting life. And it is incorrect.

"But I make no light thing of crossing the whole training of one's life. It is not a little matter to give up one's affiliation with the church of his parents. But if one learns the necessity of changing to be more correct and scriptural in the church to which he will belong, it becomes an essential. That is, if he believes that Christ's revelation teaches him to be a member of the church which he established by the shedding of His own precious blood. And truly Christ does that very thing. We should be members of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that only. And we should wear His name, and that only."

After the second sermon which so fitted her case, Peter could tell that Eloise was studying a great deal.

He was with her in the afternoon of this second Sunday, her second in the city. But he did not mention the subject privately. He did not intend to press the matter. He wanted her to have time to think. But he never doubted her honesty. And he did not mean to take advantage in teaching her. She broached the subject a time or two, but he quietly turned the conversation each time. She was just worried. She was cogitating what she had heard, and was not seeking, just at the time, any additional explanations.

But he had more in reserve that he wished her to hear. And soon she heard it.

A few days later, however, when Peter was with her again, she again broached the subject of the church.

"Do you believe, Peter, that all churches are wrong but just one?" she asked quite pointedly. It was somewhat of a surprise.

"I believe, dear, that the Bible tells about just one. I can read in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew where it is said by Christ that he would build His church. He said: 'And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' If Christ said that he would build His church, whose church would it be? It would not be Campbell's, would it? Or John Wesley's? Or John Calvin's? Whose would it be?"

He paused and waited.

"Why, it wuld be Christ's church," she said.

"That's exactly what I think about it," he answered. "And I am satisfied with the one the Lord built. I want to be a member of it, and of no other."

"But you did not answer my question," she said, plainly worried.

"Yes, and no," he said. "I believe in the one Christ

built. There is not any other that is authorized by Him. Now here is my way of looking at it. If I am satisfied with the one the Lord built and you are satisfied with the one the Lord built, then we are both satisfied, and for us there need not be any other. If the whole world will take the same view, and all would be members of that one the Lord built, then there would not be any other, would there?"

"N-no," she said.

"You've stated my position for me," he said.

"Well, will the members of all others be lost?" she asked next.

"My dear, what troublesome questions you can ask! Now about that I cannot say. It is not for me to say. All I know is that the Bible does not mention these churches; mentions none except the church called the church of God or the church of the First-Born. You see, I am at sea without chart or compass in passing judgment, except to say that the Bible does not mention other churches at all. If the members of those churches are saved, then they are saved without a promise, for God has never promised salvation to the members of the Mormon Church, to the Swedenborgian Church, or to any other man-made church. But here is what He says about salvation to the members of the church you can read about in the Bible: 'And God added to the church (the one you can read about in the Bible) daily such as were being saved.' God takes care of saving the ones in His church, or in the church which Christ said He would build. When one becomes saved, then he is added to the church you can read about in the Bible. But it is certain that God does not even mention these others. He does not tell people whether they are saved when they join these other churches or not. He just does not mention them. One will have a hard time know-

ing. But there is one thing that one can know. If he will become a member of the church which Christ said that He would build, he can know about his salvation, for God speaks of saving the ones who are members of that church."

"But you know, Peter, that all the members of these churches claim that they are all members of the one big church. They think they are only members of the branches of the main church," she said.

"But it must be a case of mistaken identity, Eloise, for they are not even called the same thing. Not only are they not called the same thing, but they do not practice the same things. The members of the church you can read about in the New Testament church met on the first day of the week, or Sunday of our calendar, sang songs, as we read in the fourteenth chapter of first Corinthians, had the Lord's Supper, as we read in the eleventh chapter of the same book, contributed of their means, as we read in the sixteenth chapter, prayed as we read they were exhorted to do in the second chapter of first Timothy. These were their items of worship. And they bore the name of Christians. But some of these other churches, when they meet, play instead of singing, do not partake of the same Lord's Supper on the first day of each week. Wearing a different name, and doing different things and not being guided by the same book, the Bible, but the traditions of men, I do not find that they fit the picture. I fear there is mistaken identity. If they are the same, then why don't they do the same things, wear the same name, and follow the same guide book?

"But of course it is my contention that all ought to do the same things, follow the same book, the Bible, discarding all creeds, and wear the same names. If that were done though, don't you see that pretty soon

there would be but one church? And then what would become of Mormonism, of Swedenborgianism, of all other isms?"

"There wouldn't be any, I guess," Eloise said.

"And then if all these present isms were converted to the Lord's church there would not be any other church? Now that is exactly my contention. And that is my effort. I want all people to become members of the Lord's church. If they do that, then there will not be any other. And no other is needed."

"But my question is not answered," she said.

"I can only answer it indirectly and very unsatisfactorily," he said. "I cannot be pointed about the matter for the reason that judging is the Lord's business. But I make the same statement that I made awhile ago. If the members of all the churches we know about are finally saved, they are saved without a promise. God has not promised salvation to the members of the church of Mormon anywhere in the Bible. But He has promised salvation to those who are members of the church which Christ purchased with his blood. Here is where we have the statement of the purchase price: 'For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances; to make of himself of the twain (or two) one new man, so making peace, and that he might reconcile both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body (or church) by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.' (Eph. 2:13-16) Christ died for this church, or body. Gave his own blood for it, that he might make it of Jew and Gentile. This body of Christ, into which he incorporates those whom he saves of Jews and Gentiles, is simply his church. It is his spiritual body. In the twelfth

chapter of first Corinthians the Apostle Paul tells us more about this same body of Christ. It is Christ's spiritual body. And he says there that the members of the Corinthian church were the members of this body. And not only did he say that they constituted a part of the body of Christ, were in the body of Christ, but he said in the twentieth verse that there is but one body! There is BUT one body. If there is but one body, into which Jesus incorporates both Jews and Gentiles, and that body is the church, as the Apostle Paul says again in the twenty-third verse of the first chapter of Ephesians, there is but one church.

"Question. Whose church is that? It is the body of Christ. The Apostle Paul says so. If it is the body of Christ, and that body is the church, then it is the church of Christ. If not, why not? And remember that Christ purchased this body, or church, with his own blood. Evidently it is a very precious church to the Lord, since he gave himself for it. And I think it is important to try to please the Lord by being a member of it, and a member of it only. The religious world does not enough honor Christ by exalting His name and His body, the church. They are too easily satisfied.

"But we had better be safe than sorry. Just be members of the Lord's church, of his body, and wear His name. And then do just what He says. Follow only His word."

"It does look simple, as you put it, Peter. But it must all be very mysterious, considering the way things are going."

"It is confusion worse confounded, my dear, but God is not to blame for it. And Jesus is not to blame for it. He prayed that his disciples might all be one, even as He and the Father were one."

CHAPTER XII

Peter was a young man with a long head. An old man's head was on his shoulders. He weighed problems before acting. He was a born executive, and student of men and women.

Peter had his opinion of Smythe Hawkins. And that opinion was that Smythe Hawkins would not do.

It was odd, the influence he (Peter) exerted upon the whole church, by speaking in favor of a thing here, or mildly opposing a thing there. It was like the light touch of a mariner upon the controls of a great ship. Only a light touch was required. A light touch in time. If not given in time, then strength had to be exerted to bring about the congregational ship in a hurry, to avoid some danger point. Peter was a super-pilot of the ship of statesmanship within the church. He had the pilot's sense of danger, and the knowledge of human nature necessary to tell him just when a light touch needed to be given, or when a slight turn needed to be made.

A little flattery of a man's talents, so as to bring out the best that there was in him, and to encourage him in a worthy course, and to obviate a danger in that person's taking a wrong attitude. How Peter did work with the human heart! Search out its depths, appeal to its honor, prick its sense of pride, subdue it to ends for which he was deftly working. Without this insight into the human heart no one can be a leader of men. Peter had it, fortunately.

He also knew that a violent opposition to another's position does never pay. He knew that however just a criticism, the one criticised felt a rankling in his heart. So Peter opposed things with which

he did not agree very diplomatically. When it was better diplomacy to be firm and open, he was firm and open. When the force of his will needed to be felt he imposed it. But when he could get his ends without open opposition to a measure, he went about it quietly through others.

Peter opposed the suggestion that Smythe Hawkins be made a deacon. He did not need to oppose the suggestion publicly. He managed to stop the incipient danger he saw in the move before it got that far. As before stated, Peter was convinced that Smythe Hawkins would not do.

Smythe Hawkins was certainly an individualistic person. He was unlike any one Peter had ever seen. Vision a big man, physically. Heavy jowls. Auburn hair. Blue eyes, with an uncertain, doubtful look in them. About thirty-five years of age. Not a great paunch, like one will sometimes have when he is well past middle age, if he eats a lot. But big all over, in harmony with his age. Perhaps he was destined to have a great paunch sometime, but he did not have it now. And one thing that kept him pretty well in form was the fact that he was an automobile mechanic, and exerted himself a lot.

But the mental life of Smythe Hawkins was another matter. Some peculiar quirk of heredity had imparted a warped view of things.

When Brother Hawkins was contemplating coming to Pinehurst Street he made some to do about it. He did not wish to come quietly. He sent for Peter, and talked with him at length. At that particular time he was a dissatisfied member of the Maywood Christian Church. This church, though a part of the original movement that looked toward a complete unification of all believers upon the Bible and the Bible alone, as the only rule of faith and

practice, had come to the point of practicing "open church membership"—that is, of taking folks into the church without baptism—of having a regular orchestra in conjunction with the song service, and of using any device suggested by the brain of man for doing missionary work. It was the most liberal of the liberals, in a world of lax religious standards. A church with any such liberality and methods Peter opposed with all his might. He felt that any such skimmed-milk religion, that was religio-social in its nature, was traitorous to the cause of Christ; that it did much to weaken respect for the Bible as the standard of human conduct, both as regards worship and work within the church and individual actions in everyday life. Peter's contention was that since such churches had already deserted the plain Bible plan, and taken to the innovations of man, adding anything they wanted because, as they said, "The Bible does not condemn it," were already far from the God of the Bible and were swiftly galloping toward the devil. And he was in favor of urging them to speed farther away. The greater the difference between the folks who tried to be governed by the Bible and those who would take to any innovation, the easier for the one on the outside to see the difference. Anyhow, Brother Smythe Hawkins was with this particular church, which seemed not to have any great regard for the Bible way of doing things. He had been baptized for the remission of sins. Therefore he had nothing to do, he stated to Peter, as he saw it, except to transfer his membership from the Maywood Christian Church to the Pinehurst Street Church of Christ. Peter told him that he had been practicing unscriptural things and that he should acknowledge the error in that practice. Well, he would do that. He did not believe it was right to engage in those things anyway. He did not really know why he had done as he had. His

father had taught him the correct way. Now he wanted to come into the Pinehurst Street Church.

His wife was a member of a denominational church. She had been sprinkled in infancy. She would be buried with Christ in baptism for the remission of sins.

Peter was bent on looking beneath the surface. He wondered how good a member Smythe Hawkins made in the church he was leaving. He wondered if that church was satisfied with him. He did not want to build up a church out of disgruntled folk. But of course he saw no way to refuse Brother Smythe Hawkins. And, while he did not trust him very much, thought he could detect an insincere note in him, he determined to watch him and not let him get too much of a run. He sensed the fact that Brother Hawkins would like to play a big part in the Pinehurst Street Church.

And that was exactly the reason why Smythe Hawkins was leaving the church of which he was a member. He had striven for recognition, and it had been denied him. He was leaving in disgust. He had not troubled to tell the good folk over there the reasons for his departure, or that he was departing. Peter suspected the whole thing.

Brother Hawkins insisted on getting up and making a statement to the whole congregation on the Sunday that he and his wife presented themselves for membership. She to be baptized, of course, and he to place membership. He told the congregation that his father was a preacher of the gospel—an old time preacher out in Texas—and that he had learned the truth 'round his mother's knee. But his life had been a tortuous course. He had married outside the church. Finally he and his wife had compromised on their views by both going into the Maywood Christian Church. Now, after a long time, they had come to

the conclusion that they would both go into the Church of Christ, which was striving to do only those things which one can read from the Good Book. He was sorry that he had practiced, in conjunction with others, things for which one can not find specific authority in the Bible. His good wife was being baptized and he was coming into the church there. He hoped to help them to do great things.

Peter was not carried away with the occasion. He would wait and see. But there were those who were carried away. It was a large stroke Brother Hawkins made. He became popular, with an element, from that day forth. And therein was a problem created for Peter and the elders of the church.

Brother Smythe Hawkins got right into the life of the church. He gave social entertainments at his house. He arranged some select picnic gatherings. One special Sunday he had his plans all laid out to take a number of the folk about twenty miles out to a shaded region, rich in scenic beauty, where there was a large, crystal clear spring. All had a great time. And Brother Hawkins was in the midst of things. His voice was the loudest and his smile the happiest of all.

Brother Hawkins was always ready to motor to a point of interest with any group. He got behind a mission effort out a few miles from Andover in a delightful village. Peter did the preaching. And Brother Hawkins and his good dark-eyed wife, who was a complete shadow, always being where he wanted her to be and doing the things he wanted her to do, was there.

The strange relationship of Brother Smythe Hawkins and his wife, Luella, was a subject of cogitation to Peter. Mrs. Hawkins seemed to be an intelligent woman. She evidently did detect the faults in her

great big husband. But she never complained. Whether she was a subjugated personality, who did not dare to live an individual life, it was hard to say. But surely, thought Peter, that was the answer.

Brother Hawkins moved upon the situation with force. He began to have special gatherings at his house. But unfortunately, so far as his own plans were concerned, he unwisely began to narrow his attentions to a definite group. And to fire them with his opinions. He had a lively feast for them one Sunday at his house. The weather being warm and agreeable, he arranged tables on the outside on his spacious lawn (he had a lovely place) and spread a great feast. It was on this day that Brother Hawkins began to show definitely his radical turn. He became ultra-conservative. He said he believed that certain things were done in the Pinehurst Street Church that were wrong. He did not believe in the organized Sunday school work in which the church was engaged, he said. And the strange thing about Brother Hawkins was that, having come to the Pinehurst Street Church from the very liberal "digressives," he should have soon reacted to the other extreme and become more conservative than any of those who were in the church. He opposed dividing into classes. He opposed a good many things, in fact.

Peter knew about this last big feast, and the things that came out of it. Brother Hawkins had definitely attempted to lead a group of the brethren away from the Pinehurst Street Church. The reason was that about two months previous to that time he and his friends had made a big effort to get into power. Peter and the elders blocked that move. Disappointed, he had turned to be a bell leader, with the intention of starting a group upon a course to please himself.

It pained the leaders of the church to know of such a development.

The meeting called to consider the question was a disturbed one. But the leaders of the church, upon examination of the situation, found that only about eight of the members, some of them children, were tied up beyond redemption. A few more would turn. Give them time. They would tire of the reckless leadership, unsafe as it was, of Brother Hawkins.

"The question is, What shall we do with this situation?" asked Royal Davis, one of the deacons.

"My advice is that since these few brethren did meet in the home of Brother Hawkins last Sunday for worship", said Peter, "that we treat the situation as lightly as we can. To contrary them, and fight back is just what they expect and want. Then they will fight too. Go to all the members they can, and agitate and disturb. If you'll leave it to me, I'll go out and see Brother Hawkins. I will speak lightly of the matter. Tell him that if it is the desire of himself and others to have worship there in his home, instead of making the drive to Pinehurst Street Church building, we'll not impose any strenuous objections, but that of course we had rather they would come down and worship with us. In my judgment that is better than making the fight bitter, and giving him a chance to stir his followers to a white heat, if we withdraw from them for insurbordination.

CHAPTER XIII

One of those uninteresting moments, filled with ennui, which clutter every mortal's life, was upon Peter. He began the day as usual. He took a cold bath upon rising. Shaved. But he was no more than dressed when Mrs. Stiles had breakfast.

Old Brother and Sister Stiles, who were not really old after all, being only in their sixties, slept less than in their younger days. They were always up before Peter was about. He visited numbers of the members at night. Some of the working-class folk who composed his membership could not be seen very well at other times. Then there were business meetings, meetings of the teachers of the Bible school, social gatherings, meetings of special workers, as for example, the committee of young folk who arranged programs for the seven o'clock meetings on Sundays, which were some times denominated Young People's Meetings, because of the lack of a better way of saying what was meant (and the official terms used by the denominational world covering a similar line of work were banned.) Attendance upon these manifold duties, and being, ex officio, a member of everything, and necessarily present at all functions, kept Peter busy nearly every night in the entire week. Besides, he visited a great deal of course, in the day time, when he made sick calls, and other necessary calls. But being out a lot at night, Peter came to the point where he did not retire until about eleven o'clock. And, therefore, he usually began to stir at about seven o'clock in the morning. Mr. and Mrs. Stiles were always up as much as two hours in advance. They had been accustomed to rising early for

years, and also to retiring early at night. But they always waited breakfast for their boarder.

Peter's ennui was still somewhat apparent, even after his cold plunge, when he went to the table.

Brother Stiles was hard of hearing. He did not talk very much. Sister Stiles carried on most of the conversations that were started. But Brother Stiles was a bit sensitive of his defect, and Peter tried to talk so that the old brother could hear, too. And as his voice was clear, and his enunciation distinct, Brother Stiles understood him better than he did most people. But conversations were more limited because Peter did not wish to offend by seeming to ignore the old brother and carrying on conversations with Mrs. Stiles. Hence, he did not mention some things that he would have otherwise when he was in their presence. Besides, Brother Stiles was rather old fashioned in his ideas, and Peter sometimes saw the necessity of explanations to keep from being misunderstood. This also put a ban on the conversational features of the family at home.

When Peter went to the table he was greeted by Brother Stiles as usual.

"Morning!"

Mrs. Stiles smiled as she came out of the kitchen bearing a plate of warm toast on which the butter had been melted.

"How are you?" Peter inquired of Brother Stiles, and turning to meet Mrs. Stiles' smile said:

"Did you rest well last night?"

"Very well, thank you," she said.

Sitting to table at their usual places, Brother Stiles offered thanks. He and Peter took it time about. This morning was Brother Stiles' time.

After thanks had been offered Brother Stiles

shoved the plate of warm toast toward Peter. He said nothing.

"Thanks!" Peter said.

The breakfast consisted of toast, country sausage, eggs, and honey in the comb. Peter ate a hearty breakfast. He usually did. If the breakfast varied to cereal, or fruits, or buckwheat cakes, he had an equal appetite. He was not at all peculiar about his eating.

Breakfast finished, Brother Stiles retired to an arm chair in one corner of the large dining room, reached for a large jar of Prince Albert tobacco and his pipe and prepared to enjoy his postprandial smoke. He said that it aided digestion. And he usually had this smoke without doing anything else. It was a sort of luxury.

Brother Stiles had amassed a competence in life, and now he had his money tied up in good investments, principally real estate, and he could take it easy. He and his good wife had taken Peter to board because they had been approached about it, and they thought it would be a good thing to do to afford him a home. And it was not many months until they had a very fond regard for Peter, and he for them. He came to be regarded as a fixture, as a part of the family.

Brother Stiles was not very talkative, but read a great deal and was generally considered well informed. He was an especially good Bible student. Sometimes he started some warm arguments with Peter for the fun of the thing. And he could almost make him twist, too. At such a time as he thought he had pressed Peter into a difficult place in an argument, a glint would come in his eye, and he would say,

"Ah, I got you that time!"

And he gloried in it. But Peter also enjoyed these occasional encounters. They put metal into him.

On the day to which allusion is being principally made, while Brother Stiles smoked Mrs. Stiles set the dishes away, without washing them just at that time, and came in to sit and talk. Peter took a seat, picked up the morning paper, and began to read casually.

"It's going the rounds, Brother Finwick, that you are very attentive to a young lady who has been coming to church for several months now. There is no objection to your being attentive to her in any unfair sense, or any thought that you have infringed the rules of—er-propriety," Mrs. Stiles said. "But some of the members think you ought to be able to find a young lady in the church, who is a member of the church, to pay attention to. They think you are in love with this young lady, a Miss Corbyn, I believe. And they say it would never do for you to marry a girl who is not a member of the church.

"Now I don't want you to get offended, nor to think that I am meddling in your business. But I am talking to you just like I would a son, if I had one. We've never had any children. But I feel like you are about as close as a son. And that is why I find courage to tell you what I have been hearing," Mrs. Stiles said.

She had no sooner begun to speak on the subject than Peter laid his paper down and looked at her fixedly. Though not with offense or rancor. She got his whole attention when she mentioned the subject of his sweetheart.

"I suspected that some folk would make just such remarks," Peter said. "And for Eloise's sake, and for mine as well, I have tried to be careful. But I

knew that our regard for one another would be known. In fact, it could not be concealed."

"Maybe some of the young ladies of the church are jealous of this girl, Brother Finwick," Mrs. Stiles said.

Mr. Stiles was sitting, placidly smoking his pipe. He had not heard distinctly what had been said.

"What are you talking about?" he asked as he looked from one to the other.

"About his girl," Mrs. Stiles said.

"Who is she?" Mr. Stiles asked.

"Why, Jim, hadn't you noticed?" asked Mrs. Stiles.

"No," he answered.

"I said that—" said Mrs. Stiles, and then she explained what had passed.

"She is a good looking girl," Mr. Stiles said to Peter when Mrs. Stiles had concluded.

"Say she is not a member of the church?" he next asked.

"No," said Peter.

"Hmm. You know what the Bible says about being unequally yoked together with unbelievers, don't you?" asked Brother Stiles.

"Yes, I know," said Peter. And then he quoted the passage.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my

people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty."

"But this passage of Scripture has no more reference to marriage than it does to any other connection, Brother Stiles. It might have as direct a bearing upon one's business relations. It is only worse in degree of the closeness of the relationship to be married to one who is not a member of the church than it is to be associated with one in the grocery business who is not a Christian. I do not believe that the passage has primary relation, or reference to marriage. But of course it covers marriage. That I shall not deny. But it covers the bonds of wedlock only by inference. It does not specifically mention it."

"Probably you are right," Brother Stiles replied. "But what do you mean to do about it?" he asked.

"Don't be so personal, Jim. If Brother Finwick knows the Scriptures it is up to him to say about that," Mrs. Stiles said.

"I mean to follow the Scripture," Peter answered. "I have no intention of marrying outside the church. And yet I feel that this girl is the girl for me. But as long as things are like they are now I cannot marry her. I am just hoping that she will see her duty and obey it. And I don't want to urge her too much. You see, I want her to learn the truth and to obey it from her heart. And I don't want to be guilty of urging her so that she would lose that independence of action that alone can cause acceptable obedience to God. You see, I have absolute faith in the goodness of her heart, and that she will see this thing as it is. I believe that she will see the reason for the

position we occupy with reference to pure, New Testament Christianity, and that she will be glad to come into the church that we can read about in the Bible, the one that bears the name of Christ and that follows his doctrine absolutely, and that is unhampered by the traditions of men, like the one her folk are members of now.

"Meanwhile, it seems, I must incur the displeasure of some of the members of the church. Moses married a woman not of his people. Samson loved a woman of another nation. Both men were right powerful with God. Of course I cannot claim the excuse that either of these men had, but I can claim the excuse of being unable to find a girl in the world that suits me as well as Eloise. How I wish she and all her people were members of the Church of Christ!"

"Well, you ought to be cautious about this matter, Brother Finwick, for the church's sake," Brother Stiles said.

"I am going to," said Peter. "And now I tell you what I am going to do. I am going over to Old Sister Slocum's today, casually pay her a visit, and get her to start what I want to be disseminated among the members. I am going to tell her that Eloise is a very dear friend whom I had met before coming to Andover, and that I am very pleased to have her attend the services. Also I am going to tell her that I am very proud of our splendid group of young people. And I am going to tell her that I think her granddaughter, Madge Oberholtzer is a beautiful girl, and I think she is as sweet as can be. Then I am going over to Sister Jessup's, talk to her in the same way and talk about her daughter Winnie like I do about Madge Oberholtzer. And, as undesirable as it is for a young, unmarried preacher to pay too much atten-

tion to the young ladies of the church, I'll rather be forced to do it until this score is evened. I don't know what you think of this plan of mine. And you may think I am "playing the game" a little too far. But when you have some folks to deal with if you don't play the game, blooey, you take the air. Folks won't let you be yourself, love normally, and make the selections you would make. If you don't do to please them you are all wrong. But I can play this game and seem to please them. And I shall, for the good of the cause of Christ. But I am going to try to be cautious not to over-do it. Danger lies there too. But at least I can divert some attention from Eloise, and give her a chance to learn the truth and to obey it, under this difficulty.

"What do you think of it?"

"That will be grand," said Mrs. Stiles.

"Paddle your own canoe," said Mr. Stiles.

"If you see me over-doing it, tell me so," said Peter.

CHAPTER XIV

Eloise did not go to the evening services. Peter thought it unwise to escort her about too much. And he had done but little of that sort of thing, in truth. He called upon her, talked with her at the services, when she was present on Sunday mornings, and took her to different places through the week. But to essort her to church on Sunday nights he would not dare.

The morning sermons were usually given over to teaching along the line of practical Christianity. Peter also preached, on Sunday mornings, a series of sermons on the church, its organization and its work. But he had preached but a few "first principle" sermons on Sunday mornings in the months that he had been with the Pinehurst Street Church. It was largely for Eloise's benefit, therefore, that he launched into a series of sermons on Sunday mornings on "first principles."

The first of these sermons was on the division of the word of God. Peter took as his text 2 Timothy 2:15: "Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." He emphasized that there is a right way to divide the word of God, called the word of truth. And there is a wrong way. Many, many people divide the Bible in the wrong way. Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." The Apostle Paul said to the young preacher Timothy to "study to show himself approved." The Bible therefore required studying. One could not expect to make a right application of the Scriptures, or

to make a right division of them, unless he would study. The Bible facts had to be learned just the same as the facts of any other book.

Some of the outstanding facts about the Bible were, (a) it was divided into two main divisions, called the Old Testament and the New Testament, (b) these two main divisions were further subdivisible into parts, the Old Testament into Law, History, Poetry and Prophecy; the New Testament into the Life of Christ, the History of the Church, in Acts of the Apostles, Letters to the churches telling them how to conduct themselves in their public worship and in their private lives, and finally, the Book of Revelation, which was also prophecy. Peter elaborated upon these divisions. He showed how the first five books of the Old Testament contained the Law of Moses, which was given at Mt. Sinai, when God wrote the Ten Commandments upon the two tables of stone, thus making a covenant with the nation of Israel. He gave the setting for that great, and distant event. He outlined God's dealings with Abraham, the promises that were made to him; the journey of the Israelites, under Joseph and Jacob, down into Egypt; their later period of slavery; the deliverance under Moses; the crossing of the Red Sea, the journey through the wilderness to Mt. Sinai, and then the giving of the law. Next followed, through all their vicissitudes, the national history of the Jews, the songs sung by their bards, the poetry of their poets, and the prophecy of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the others.

He explained that the Old Testament was "a shadow of that which was to come," a figure, or type of the things of the New Testament. The Old Testament, taken alone, was an incomplete book. It kept telling of a promised Redeemer and Saviour, but never told of his coming.

"The case of the Moravian Missionaries among the Indians will explain this point," said Peter. "Some of those first missionaries translated the Old Testament and gave it to their disciples. The Indians read what was given them, and then they turned to the Moravians in mystification.

"'This book is not complete,' the Indians said. 'It tells of some one who was to come. We do not find where he came. Where is the rest of it? We want to finish the story. There is more, we know.' Then the Moravians translated the New Testament and gave it to their disciples, and the Indians then said: 'Here it is! The first part of this book tells of the birth of this promised Deliverer, the Redeemer. That Person is Jesus of Nazareth. We find he was baptized by John the Baptist, then he was tempted of the devil; he began to preach the gospel of the kingdom; he gathered about him twelve apostles; he was crucified, but he arose from the dead; he sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles to guide them into all truth; those apostles told men and women what to do to be saved from their sins; the history of the Church of Christ under the apostles was sketched, etc.'

"It has been said that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. The Old is not complete without the New. But they both tell of different ages, and record different things to be done in the name of Jehovah of hosts.

"We are not told to go out and build an ark, like Noah was; we are not required to offer animal sacrifices, as the Jews did under Moses and the long line of the Levitical priesthood.

"We are under Christ, and we are to do what he has required of us through the apostles. He commands us to believe, repent, and be baptized for the

remission of sins, but Moses did not require these things of the Jews. The reason is that we live in a different age, different dispensation of time. 'We are not under law, but under grace.' So if you wish to find your duty, and have never become a Christian, don't go to the Old Testament expecting to find it, for you will not. But go to that portion of the Bible that gives that duty, namely, to the New Testament, and specifically to the book of Acts, for there you will find the history of the first cases of conversion after Chrst had died for the sins of the world! God has not only told you what to do to be saved, but well knowing the weakness of humanity and the proneness to misunderstand, he has taken the pains to have the points acted out for us. He has showed how it was done in the case of the Samaritans, recorded in the eighth chapter of Acts; in the case of the eunuch, same chapter; in the case of Saul of Tarsus, given in the ninth chapter of Acts; in the case of the jailer at Phillipi, detailed in the sixteenth chapter of Acts, and in many other cases."

Peter made a number of other points that cannot be accurately reported.

The Bible had been a perfect haze before the mind of Eloise Corbyn before. She regarded it as a great and inexplicable mystery, which folk could not see alike. But it was because she had been taught from infancy that such was true of the greatest of all books, the Book of books. Now the light of an order, out of a chaos, began to trickle into her mind. She had been taught that one's duty could be read on every page of the Bible. Peter flatly contradicted that statement. He said that there was not a single duty for any human being told in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, but there was recorded the great agony, in prophesy, of Jesus in purchasing redemption for the world of the condemned. He said that no one could

read a duty, his individual duty, in the geneaology of the first two chapters of First Chronicles. God had written the duty for alien sinners, that is, unregenerated persons, unsaved persons, in the New Testament, and specifically in the book of Acts. If one were an alien sinner and wanted to learn his duty he would have to go to the point where such was recorded. If one wanted to learn the events in the life of Christ, he should go to the first four books of the New Testament. In no other parts of the Bible could one find the facts of the life of the immaculate Son of Mary, and the Son of God, except in those books. They were simply memoirs, or biographies, divinely inspired, of the greatest Being who had lived upon the earth. One could not find the facts of the life of Christ in Genesis, in the Old Testament, for the reason that Genesis did not tell them. And if one wished to learn something of the church at work, glean points that would enable him to understand the government of the Church of Christ, he would have to study about that government in Acts of Apostles and in the letters to the churches.

Peter's second sermon dovetailed right into his first one. He connected it logically. He named the sermon "The Great Commission of Our Lord."

He said:

"Christ gave two commissions to his apostles. One has been called the Limited Commission, in that it limited the scope of their work and confined their labors to the Jews alone. It was given during the personal ministry of Jesus. In it Jesus said, 'Go not into the cities of the Gentiles, and into any house of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Hence, they were to preach only to the Jews. The message that they had to deliver was the message that Jesus preached.

It was to the effect that the kingdom of God was approaching, that it would soon come.

"This commission was executed and closed with the death of Christ. After his death and resurrection he gave another commission, another charge, or marching orders, which was infinitely the greatest that any set of men ever had or ever can have, even unto the end of the world! That commission had in contemplation nothing short of the conversion of the whole world!

"Jesus said, 'Go into all the world.' Not to the Jews only this time, but to all the world. But here is the complete quotation:

"'Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'

"This record is taken from the last chapter of the Gospel of Matthew. Here is the parallel passage in the Gospel of Mark:

"'Afterwards he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and unbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed them not which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.'

"And yet under another circumstance we have the

commission called great. This time it was given by the third writer of the life of Christ, Luke. He said:

"'And he said unto them (Jesus speaking to the two disciples who had gone with him upon the way to Emmaus, and later with whom he sat at meat), Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ, to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.'

"Each one of these three writers says some things that neither of the others does say. But despite the different wording, they all mean fundamentally the same thing. By putting these passages together, or placing them on parallel lines, as I have done here on this board for the sake of illustration, I think I can readily cause you to comprehend the essential unity of the commission. When we place them parallel and sum up the main points of all three we get a complete understanding of what was intended.

"Now the duties of this commission are divided. The duty of going to all the world, of preaching the gospel to every creature under heaven, or among all nations, as the last named writer puts it, was the duty of the apostles. They were to go, to go to all the world and to make disciples out of all creatures. They were told to do this by teaching them. That is the way St. Matthew puts it. They were to preach the gospel. That is the way Mark puts it. They were to preach repentance and (offer) remission of sins, in the name of Christ, Luke says. Do they therefore tell different things? No! A thousand times no. They worded the same divine thoughts just a little differently. They all said the apostles were to go 'to every creature' 'in all the world,' to 'preach the gospel' or 'teach,' to 'preach repentance

and remission of sins.' The words of the three writers summed up give us this reading. They agree perfectly.

"The next point outlined by the three writers in giving the great commission is the duty of the ones who should hear the gospel, or be taught by those apostles. In other words, the things the apostles would tell the creatures of earth to do. First, they were to believe the gospel when it should be preached to them. Mark said this. They were to repent of all their sins when they should hear the gospel story. Luke said this. And they were to be baptized. Matthew and Mark both said this. Putting the three together and looking for the full duty of the sinner, in following the plan of the Lord who had sent the apostles to him, he was to believe, repent, and be baptized 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

"But Jesus did not allow the execution of the world's greatest commission, given only at that time orally, until he sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. He promised the Holy Spirit to them specifically for that purpose, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel of John. So while he gave this commission after the resurrection and before his ascension into heaven, he commanded the apostles to tarry, or wait, in the city of Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, namely, the Holy Spirit.

"The apostles were obedient to this command, given with a view to the carrying out of the great commission which Christ had given them. And then the Bible says, 'When the day of Pentecost was fully come they (the apostles) were all together with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and

it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.' It gave them utterance. It filled them, and gave them utterance. Jesus had told them to wait for this very thing. And then, divinely guided by the Spirit, they should begin to preach the gospel to every creature in all the world! And on this very day they began. They told of Jesus Christ, who came according to prophecy. They told of his life, his death, his resurrection and of his ascension. They told of his coronation at the right hand of God in heaven. They told the people that Christ had sent this demonstrating power of the Holy Spirit, which the people both saw and heard. And when the people heard, they were cut to the heart and cried out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' And they were answered by the apostles, who were guided by the Holy Spirit: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the promise of the Holy Spirit.' Aye, there it is! Jesus said in the great commission that people should be taught. The apostles on Pentecost taught the people. Jesus said in the great commission that people should believe. And now these people are sufficient believers to want to do all that God commanded them, and they ask for the will of God to be revealed to them. And Jesus said in the great commission that the creatures who should be taught the gospel should repent. And now the apostles on Pentecost are commanding that very thing. Jesus said in the great commission that people should be baptized. And now the divinely guided apostles are instructing the people to be baptized for the remission of sins! See how the practice fits the

theory! It is as if Jesus, giving the world's greatest commission, felt there might be a misunderstanding. And so, he guides and inspires the apostles into acting out that very commission. Not only is the thing given, but God has it acted out. You know, an example is the strongest kind of teaching. I might tell a person to do a thing, and he would understand, perhaps, if he had never seen it done, very imperfectly what I wanted done. But if, after I have told him I want a certain thing done I go and show him how, then he knows what I mean! And so it was with Jesus and the apostles. And so God has given us a number of examples of conversions to him, in the book called Acts of Apostles. And if I don't understand the terms of my salvation, I can go to that book and see how it was done, in many, many cases. And if after that I say I don't know what to do to be saved, perhaps God will save me on the ground of irresponsibility! Certainly ought to, it seems to me.

"And now as to the action of baptism, as found in the great commission, which is given as one of the conditions of human pardon and redemption, let me invite your attention to the sixth chapter of Romans where the great apostle to the Gentiles, Saul of Tarsus, tells us about it: 'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sins, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we who are dead to sins live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, even we also should be raised to walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.' This passage completely clarifies the subject. It

dispels the mist, if there be any. Paul said it was a burial. A burial into the death of Christ. If it is a burial, it certainly is not a sprinkling or a pouring. One would not bury a dead animal by sprinkling some dirt on its head. He would cover it! And we are told baptism is a burial. That ought to settle it. But we have another quotation in the New Testament that says baptism is a burial. 'Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him.' Colossians chapter two, verse twelve."

Peter delivered a stirring exhortation, and a warm invitation. When the song was sung the first person to be seen coming down the central aisle of the church house was Eloise Corbyn! Peter was hardly able to comprehend it. But he exulted, too. This was a great desire of his heart, and one that, under the circumstances, he had been unable to press. However, while he could not press it personally and privately, he certainly could preach it with all his power. And this he did.

Eloise expressed a desire to be baptized that night after the evening service. She explained to Peter that she had never realized before her duty was so very plain. She said that she had been sprinkled in infancy, which Peter knew. But Peter had taught that a person must be taught the gospel of Christ before an acceptable obedience could be rendered to God, and then, too, he had shown that the baptism which Jesus required was a burial. And so she, conscientious of heart that she was, wanted to do these things in exactly the right way and for herself.

Arrayed in baptismal robes that night, Peter thought he had never seen her look sweeter, for her loveliness was enhanced, in his eyes, by her willingness to be led by the Bible into a complete obedience.

CHAPTER XV

It was about two weeks after her baptism that Eloise called Peter over telephone one night just after he had finished his dinner and told him that she wanted him to come over.

"I'll be right over, dear," he said.

To himself he said, "There must be something troubling her. She seemed slightly up-set about something. Wonder what it is Well, I'll soon know."

The weather was unpleasant. It was a late winter spell, with a strong, bitter-cold breeze blowing, while across the sky scurried more or less ominous clouds. Peter mumbled to himself as he went toward the car line for a street car that he would not be surprised if it snowed before morning. He drew his coat collar tight about his neck. By force of habit he stepped a little higher than usual. There was a broken place in the pavement. He knew this trail he took every inch. Also he knew the way he went to see Eloise so well that almost unconsciously he made the transfer at Twentieth Street and Juniper Avenue.

When Peter rang the bell it was Mrs. Chisolm who answered the door. She was always nice to Peter—nicer, or friendlier than to most folk. She liked him very much. He was open, above-board, frank, and his vivid personality had impressed her. She was a rather sour soul, and did not bubble over gossip and goodness toward any. But she greeted Peter very pleasantly.

"Miss Corbyn has spoken to me about your coming this evening. She talked with me about it before she called you. She is worried about something.

"Here. Let me put your coat and hat here on this

hall tree. And you'll find Eloise in the living room there. No one will disturb you in your conversation tonight, unless you should hear me in the dining room."

'Thank you, very kindly, Mrs. Chisolm."

Mrs. Chisolm's house was large. The living room and dining room joined, and the aperture was very wide, and open. Excellent taste was shown in the furnishing, which was not at all luxurious, but certainly suggestive of elegance. Mrs. Chisolm was a woman of taste and refinement. And she shifted well. Many a person having recourse to her form of livihood would have not done so well. Her husband had left her enough insurance, and in a small savings account, to purchase this large old house. And she had shown good business judgment in everthing she had done since his demise. She was a confirmed widow, and while an eligible elderly man looked her way every once in a while, she gave marriage no serious thought. She had one man, whom she had cared for deeply, and she did not mean to take another one. She had two married children, a boy and a girl. Both of these lived down state in a small town, where she had reared them to maturity. After her husband's death she moved to Andover and engaged in keeping boarders, where we now find her.

Peter entered the living room, and ensconsed in a deep arm chair he caught a vision of lovliness. How beautiful she was! The thought ran through his mind for the thousandth time.

Where was Mrs. Chisolm? Oh, well! He could content himself by shaking her trim little hand and looking at her. But it was not the kind of greeting he preferred.

When comfortably seated, she in the large chair and Peter on a divan about three feet away (the chair

was drawn up under a floor lamp just back beyond one end of the divan, and faced it at an angle) Eloise turned to the purpose of her telephone call.

"Mother and Dad are coming over for a week end visit soon," she said.

Peter pondered that statement.

"You mean that now you will have to face the domestic issue of a difference in religious views?"

"Yes. Of course, I know that I should have to tell them sooner or later. But, naturally, I have been dreading the ordeal. What they will think and do, only the Lord knows. Dad will be more reasonable than mother. He always has been. But—but—"

"I am very sorry, dear," Peter said, and dropped his head reflectively. "I too knew that it would have to come. But, having obeyed from the heart, and because you knew it to be the exact will of the Lord, you can look the whole world in the face. You cannot answer for father or mother. And equally, and because of that very fact, you should not be prevented rendering the obedience that Jesus requires because of what your parents might think. They cannot answer for you. And since they cannot answer for you, they should be perfectly willing for you to do as your heart and conscience dictate. You remember the sermon I preached about three months ago from the text, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me'?"

"O that Scripture rings in my mind constantly. Here, I want you to turn this Bible to the place, and mark it. I shall write that passage to my parents. Also, write down a list of the Scriptures on baptism, and especially where the Bible says baptism is a burial. I intend to read those passages to mother when she comes. I intend to give her 'a reason of the hope,' as the Bible requires. I did obey intelli-

gently, I know. And not in that blind ignorance that moved my dear parents when they had me sprinkled in infancy. I knew what I was doing. And I am glad of it. Only—I know they will care like everything."

"Yes," Peter agreed. "They will care because it has been their whole experience and training and tradition. Such things form a powerful weight. The prejudice of training is great. Not many souls can rise above such prejudice immediately.

"Jesus battled this thing in his own day. The common Jewish conception of the Messiah and his kingdom was diametrically opposed to that which Jesus taught. He went against this embattled array of prejudice, and died upon its lances. Jewish prejudice put Jesus to death. The Jews tried him, condemned him and demanded his death at the hands of the Gentiles who ruled the land. Jesus said that this very thing should happen. He said that 'After three days we go to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be condemned by the Jews and shall be delivered up to the Gentiles to be crucified.' 'He came unto his own and his own received him not.' And for the reason that their traditions had built up a wall against their one greatest hope. Human nature is so blind!

"Saul of Tarsus was blind this way. He was bent upon slaying all the disciples of the Lord he could find, or lay hands on. He said that he pursued them even unto strange cities. He destroyed the Way, which later he preached. But he did it in ignorance, in unbelief. Folk do a lot of things in ignorance and unbelief. They have perhaps never stopped to investigate before they begin vigorously to destroy."

"The effort that you have made, my dear, was to go right back to the Bible, read what God requires

of those who will be saved, and then to do those things without addition or subtraction. All you want to be is a Christian, and just a Christian—no more, no less. And all you belong to is the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. How any sensible person can object to that is inconceivable. But remember that your father and your mother have been members of a church about which the Bible says not one word. But they are not going to look at it from this basic standpoint. They are going to look at it from their training. What will hurt them the deepest will be the knowledge that you have turned your back upon what they accepted. They will hardly allow you the right to do as your conscience directs, although they have always said that was correct. But it means something else when it works another way. But be patient with them, Eloise. Never tire of teaching them the reasons for your change. Every time either brings up a point, get the Bible and read from it what you have done, as the reason why you believe such and such a thing. And don't be bitter. Never let them drive you into losing your temper. Just read it to them from the Bible and then, with all the assurance in the world, close the old Book as if that settled it. Always appeal to the Bible. 'Is not my word like as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?' Just continue to hammer away with the word of God. It will get results. It may take time. But it will reach the desired end. Be assured of that.

"You see, I am giving you some gratuitious advice that I mean to mould your course in teaching your parents all down the years. The struggle may be long, but stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage."

"It does take courage, Peter. Just how much I think you cannot know. But I am positively assured that I have done exactly what God requires in being baptized for the remission of sins, and that by a burial in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And I shall not waver. Standing on the word of God, I must be like Martin Luther before the Diet of Worms when he said, 'Here I take my stand, though every tile on every house top in this city were a demon. I cannot do otherwise, God being my helper.' I have simply come to the word of God for my stand, and I cannot do otherwise. And now if worse comes to worst, it will just have to be."

Silence for some moments. They both were reflecting.

"I must write them before they come and tell them what I have done," she said.

"Yes," he agreed. "That will be better than to wait to tell them after they come. It will smack of timidity, or fear. And this matter of obedience to God from the heart should make one as bold as a lion. You have nothing to fear. 'If God be for us who can be against us?'"

But after they had talked the matter over from every conceivable standpoint and Peter had gone, Eloise found about how difficult it would be to begin to frame a letter to her parents, telling them of the great change in her life.

"My own dear Mother," she wrote, "I love you so very, very much. You have always been such a sweet mother to me. So kind, gentle, and so ready to sacrifice your wishes to mine. And dear old Dad, too. He has been wonderful. I can never be grateful enough to the dear God for all you and Dad mean to me. I am so thankful that I have loving parents

who are honorable, upright, sincere, and widely respectable.

"Having parents whom I love so deeply, there are just two things in all the world that I would do without your consent, or probably over your protest. Those things are, first, to obey God for myself, just as I see it, and, second, to follow my heart in love in marrying the man of my choice. Otherwise I always intend to be the most dutiful daughter imaginable.

"Now, while I know it will disturb you a bit, I must tell you that I have done the first of these things. I have undertaken to do what my heart tells me I should have done. I have been baptized, by a burial in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. I was baptized about two weeks ago. To be exact, last Sunday night was a a week ago. What church have I joined? None, Mother dear. I was simply baptized, as God requires one who has been taught the way of the Lord. However, I have carefully read the second chapter of Acts of Apostles, where we read of the conversion of three thousand people, and I have learned from their case what happened. It is said that 'God added to the church daily such as should be saved.' God added them to the church. What church? Why, the church you can read about in the Bible, the church Jesus said that he would build. I am contented. It is enough. I do not ask more than to be a member of the church which Jesus purchased with his own blood. And I am assured from this Scripture that if I obey, as these people did, God will add, indeed, has added me to the church. And if he did it, he made no mistake.

"Now I trust this will meet with your entire approval.

"I want to add, however, about this obedience which I rendered, that I did like the eunuch did. It is said that he and his companion came to the water. I came to the water. It is said that they went down into the water. I went down into the water. It is said that he (Phillip, the preacher) baptized him. I was baptized. It is said then that they (Phillip and the eunuch) came up straightway out of the water. I came out of the water. I wanted to do it just like they did it in the Bible time. I did not want the water brought to me. I wanted to come to it. I did not want it poured or sprinkled on me. I wanted to go down into it! I wanted to be buried in it, as the Apostle Paul said the Romans were in the sixth chapter of his letter to them. Please read it carefully. And prayerfully. It is said: 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we were **buried through baptism into his death.**' I have followed these Scriptures, and I am, Oh, so happy! Now I really know what it means to be at peace with God. I was never so happy before in my life.

"I know that you will be bound to rejoice with me in this newly found happiness, although you may not see everything as I do. But I could write on at very great length about this precious matter. However, I'll just wait and tell you more when you come to see me soon."

Then the letter turned to little personal matters.

CHAPTER XVI

Mrs. Corbyn could hardly believe her senses. She read, and reread the letter. She held it in trembling hands. While the writer of it professed happiness, in that she had obeyed the Lord just as it is recorded in the Bible that he would be obeyed, Mrs. Corbyn could not share in that happiness. She was dumbfounded. How indeed was it possible that her loving, dutiful daughter had done as she had? How could she have turned her back upon the religion of her father and mother? It seemed inconceivable, unbelievable. But here it was in black and white.

Mrs. Corbyn was shaking as if from ague, when she called her husband over telephone and told him to come home immediately.

Mr. Corbyn was busy at his desk when the telephone rang. He no sooner caught his wife's voice over the telephone than he knew something was wrong.

"I want you to come up right away, Eli. I need you."

"What is the matter?" Mr. Corbyn urged.

"I have a letter from Eloise that I want you to read."

"Well," Mr. Corbyn said.

He dropped everything and rushed up to the house. He found Mrs. Corbyn sobbing on her bed.

"What is it, Carrie? What on earth is the matter " he enquired.

"Here!" she said, thrusting the letter toward him.

He took it, drew up a hair and read thoughtfully. Finished, he sat and refleted.

Not a word was spoken for some minutes. Mrs. Corbyn raised her head to look at her husband.

"Well," Mr. Corbyn said. "It's evident that she has made some sort of a religious change. She is not absolutely specific about what it is—only that she obeyed the Lord just as it is written in the Bible and that she is happy."

"What do you suppose she means?" Mrs. Corbyn asked.

"I haven't a great idea. It's hazy to me. But it does seem evident that she has renounced her infant baptism and the church that she has been a member of all her life," Mr. Corbyn said.

"Yes, I get that much. And that is what hurts me. She has turned her back upon us, and upon our training. She has turned her back upon all that we mean in the world—the place we have worked so hard and so incessantly to come to occupy. Thrown it away with one gesture of bravado. That is what comes of sending her off where she is not under our guidance and surveillance. The work of a lifetime wasted in a few months. I am just sick, sick all over'" Mrs. Corbyn concluded as she buried her head in the pillow and sobbed convulsively.

The glow of the romance of this couple had become a mellow one. Their lives had been well fused. They understood one another. Mr. Corbyn walked over and patter her gently on the shoulder.

"There! There, dear! It is not so bad as you seem to think. She may see some things differently, but she is at least honest, honest with herself and with her God. And—and—she is still our little girl. And she professed to love you deeply in this letter. So don't take it so hard. Suppose you wait and talk all this over with her before you become too excited

about it. Then it may take on a different complexion," Mr. Corbyn counseled.

He decided not to return to the bank that afternoon. He would stay with Mrs. Corbyn. Better yet, he would take her out in the car. He could get up a little business mission at a bank over at a neighboring town. And he would insist on her going along. That would take her mind off the worry of Eloise's religious change.

Mrs. Corbyn said she would write Eloise about this religious experience of hers, but Mr. Corbyn said that he thought it unwise.

"Don't get into a wrangle with the child through the mails, Carrie. That would be a poor business. Just put off that part of it, and talk with her when you and I go over in two weeks," he advised.

So when Mrs. Corbyn wrote, she did show a coldness of spirit in the letter, but she only casually, as it were, mentioned the subject of religion.

Eloise read this letter very thoughtfully. She knew that there was something in reserve, and that she would hear more about the whole thing later.

She tried to recall whether she had intimated to her parents that Peter Finwick was in the city of Andover. And she wondered if they knew this fact. How would they take it when they learned that he had baptized her? Would they think that he had exerted himself to the utmost to make a proselyte of her? Would they blame him or her?

Wouldn't they read between the lines? Would they attribute her obedience to the gospel to a romance with this young preacher? More than likely they would. And then they might object to her going to the Pinehurst Street Church just because he preached there. And also they might determine that

she should not come to Andover to school again. Complications began to crowd her horizon.

And now what would she do about taking them to church? They would be with her over Sunday, and they always went to church services. She was scarcely acquainted with the location of one Methodist church. She did not know the preacher or any of the members. And she had always been active enough in church work to know the preacher of the church where she attended, and to know a large group of young people.

Could she, and would she "renege" now just because her parents were coming over? No she could not afford that. There was no hypocrisy in her system. She had always been open and above board. But how to avoid the complications, as ominous cloud, she saw gathering on her horizon.

If she took her parents to the Pinehurst Street Church, which was the obvious thing to do, provided they would go with her, then she would lay her romance with Peter bare. The fat would be in the fire. She might have to weather a terrible storm.

Her direct, straight-forward nature told her what to do in this troubling situation. She would go through, letting her conscience be her guide, and then she would take the consequences. Nevertheless she told Peter her fears on Thursday night before her parents came over Friday afternoon. Mrs. Corbyn planned to spend Saturday shopping, and so she pulled her husband away from his business and took him off with her on Friday.

As Eloise and Peter held a tryst at a downtown drug store, later to go to a theatre (yes, Peter would go to a clean show, but he was not a great play boy, although he was human and tried to be balanced), they talked the whole problem over.

"They will likely blame it all on me," Peter said.

"No. I shall not let them do that," she said, quite emphatically. "I cannot deny a deep personal interest in you, and I shall not deny, further, that this interest caused me to see the truth as you preach it, but I saw my way for obedience for myself, uphampered, and not over-urged, by any one. And I shall tell them so frankly," she insisted.

"I am only too glad to know that you learned the difference between the plan of the Bible, the divine plan of salvation, and the ways of men, which you had followed, or rather, that had been followed for you. Of coure there is not such a thing in the Bible as infant baptism. It is said that Jesus said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' but that does not say a single, solitary word about baptizing them. That is wholly assumed. And such assumptions have been made by men. The way of assumption, by so many men and women, has created the great weight of traditions that have offset the Bible plan. It is like it was in Christ's day. He said that the traditions of the Jews had made void the commandment of God. And today infant baptism, forced on the innocent child, later takes away its right of free choice, in that it is said to that person later in life, 'You have already been baptized.' And thus this tradition of man has kept multiplied thousands from obeying from the heart, as an infant cannot do, the form of doctrine delivered to them. The Apostle Paul said that we obey from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to us. And we cannot do that by proxy. One cannot do that for another. You have simply learned the difference and obeyed it. I am glad, inexpressibly happy, that you have learned. And now if your

parents blame me for your getting more light of the gospel of Christ, I shall be unable to regard myself as a criminal. And I am not so certain that I am not greatly to blame. So I don't want you to bear all the blame in this case," he said.

"I am terribly upset. Tomorrow and two or three days thereafter will see me in the most troublous times I have ever faced," she said. "I don't know whether they will come with me to church Sunday. I am afraid they won't."

"Do you think your folk dislike me?" he asked her. "Or is it because of the difference of view which I hold in matters of religion "

"I rather think they like you personally. But I am sure that my mother does not like your—our religion. I told her so one time when you were up to see me—remember?—in Goodnow. She seemed not to like it. She knew then that I thought well of you. And I think she would have been deeply pleased if you had been a Methodist preacher.

"I don't know whether she knows you are in Andover. I have been trying to recall whether I have mentioned your name to them since I have been here. And I do not think I have. But then some one else may have told them. And they take The Daily News, published here, and they may have seen some of your announcements in this paper on Saturdays. I don't know whether they know you are here.

"But if I get them to come with me to church Sunday, then they will know you are here! And we'll be in for it."

"I am sorry if I am going to be a bone of contention in your family, dear," he said.

"But I love you," she said quite frankly. "And

that matters more than anything else. I have always loved you—since the very first time I saw you."

"I know when that was," he said. "I looked from the stage in the high school building and saw you. And I believe I said to myself then, 'There is my future wife.' And that makes me think I have never asked you pointedly to be my wife, but I have just understood that you are to be," he said.

They had been talking in low tones, so low that sometimes they could hardly understand one another. They were in a public place. But love in throbbing cities must have a place. And so the young people make love on the busses, in the trollies, in the theatres, on benches in the parks and in drug stores. And as these two sat at a table in a downtown drug store, they were as secluded as two can be secluded in a crowded city where people throng all about them, oblivious of what they may be saying or thinking, or perhaps of what they may be doing.

"Come what may, you are to be my wife," Peter said. He had been contemplating this. And so he had provided a ring set with a lustrous diamond—what if some of the members had known he had been saving and had purchased this diamond?—for this occasion, but he had not intended to make this sort of speech in this public place! He intended to get some moments to themselves away from the crowd, away from all prying eyes. He felt of the ring box in his pocket.

Her face was suffused in the warm blood of her heart. She looked down at her trim hands. But her eye-lids fluttered as she lowered her vision.

"How I wish I had you to myself!" he said.

Her bosom heaved as she smiled up at him. She made no reply.

"But I'll renew this conversation at a more opportune time," he said, as he prepared to pay the cashier for their drinks.

That night before he left her Peter slipped the ring on her finger. It was dark on the porch where they were. She could not see it well, for the street light was some distance away.

He hastened this matter because of the visit of her parents. Now it would be known that she was wearing an engagement ring. Perhaps this would make a difference. But they would face the situation, and see what her parents did think of her being engaged to a preacher of what they thought was a heretical and despised faith.

CHAPTER XVII

Eloise's fears in regard to the feelings of her parents about her change in religious convictions were not unfounded. And she also anticipated the relative feelings of her father and mother. She was confident she would have more to contend with from her mother than from her father. Her mother had not the broad grasp of life, nor the same broad charity that her father had, and she knew it.

Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn motored over. They therefore went right straight to where their daughter boarded.

Eloise had arranged for a room for them just aross the street from where she stayed, and she had also arranged with Mrs. Chisholm for their meals at her table with her young lady boarders.

It was nearly five o'clock when Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn arrived. They drove their heavy automobile up to the curbing in front, and Eloise, watching for them, was at the side of the car by the time they were out.

"I am so glad to see you, Mother dear'" she said as she kissed her. "And dear old Dad!" she added, throwing her arms about his neck. She showed them all the warmth of greeting that she had on any occasion.

"How is my little lambkin?" Mrs. Corbyn asked. If she felt any hurt, she did not show it at first.

And Mr. Corbyn was his broad, jovial, polite, and genteel self. This he always was. That was the reason he was the size man he was, in reputation.

"How about your baggage, Dad?" Eloise asked as they started toward the house.

"We'll leave that in the car and go down to the Ambassador Hotel tonight," he said.

"No," Eloise replied. "I have arranged for you a room across the street with Mrs. Steel, and I have arranged for you to have your meals with me at Mrs. Chisholm's."

"Well then, since you have made all arrangements, why not take the baggage to the room right now?" Mr. Corbyn asked, as he stopped and looked at her.

"All right," she replied. "Do that, and get ready for dinner, for it will be served at six o'clock sharp, and besides I suppose mother is tired and would like to rest a few minutes before dressing for dinner," she concluded, looking at her mother for approval.

"Very thoughtful of you, dear," Mrs. Corbyn said, smiling sweetly. "But I am not very tired. That short distance in an automobile ought not to tire one a great deal. But I would like to go to the room, since you have arranged for us, and rest a few minutes, just to be fresh, you know."

They turned again to the car and, taking the luggage out, went across the street to Mrs. Steel's. Eloise introduced her father and mother at the door, saw them into their room, and then left them with the caution that they would not be late to dinner.

"I'll be waiting for you in the living room, and I'll see you when you come across the street," she assured them as she left.

"She is a fine, beautiful girl," Mrs. Corbyn said to her husband. "I am perfectly wild about her. And she is so sweet. But to think that she has turned her back upon her religious training. I can hardly believe it. And it just makes me sick when I think about it."

"It is no light thing, Carrie. But I am inclined to believe that you make too much of it. Why not

allow her all the latitude necessary in being religious. Now if she had done something irreligious and dreadful we would have cause to worry, but as it is, she is our same sweet, thoughtful girl, and we ought to be forbearing. And I am going to ask you again that you will not be too hard on her. And don't be sudden and drastic in getting at this thing. Take it slowly. It will come out by and by," Mr. Corbyn said.

It did come out slowly, as Mr. Corbyn said it would. Eloise was reluctant to mention the subject. And she did not give her mother much chance to mention it tactfully. She steered away from the subject several times just as her mother was ready to bring it right out to a point.

Mrs. Corbyn noticed the diamond engagement ring on Eloise's finger at dinner. She was taken aback.

"Eloise," she said, but not curtly. "I see something." And she eyed the ring meaningfully.

"Do you like it?" Eloise asked as she held it up a little. But she did not want to make it too conspicious, for there were several girls at the table, who seemed at the time to be absorbed in various things.

"Who is it?" Mrs. Corbyn asked as she leaned over a bit, with a mellow glow in her eye, perhaps coming from a reflection upon her own engagement to Mr. Corbyn.

"I'll tell you later, Mother dear," Eloise said.

The dinner was continued for some time without more conversation.

Just at the time Mr. Corbyn, who was sitting at the head of the table, at Mrs. Chisholm's request, had been busy passing a dish to a girl on his left, and he did not notice the ring, nor the remark made concern-

ing it. Mrs. Corbyn was sitting next to her husband on his right, and Eloise was sitting next to her.

Just before they retired for the night Mrs. Corbyn again asked Eloise who it was to whom she was engaged.

"Now if you'll just leave the matter entirely in my hands, Mother dear, and not annoy me about it, and will go along with me to church Sunday, asking no questions, I'll introduce you to him. And he is such a handsome, intelligent fellow that I know you will be perfectly wild about him. And—and you'll think I am lucky, I know!"

"He will be lucky, whoever he is. And moreover, I'll never believe he is good enough for you," Mrs. Corbyn said.

Mrs. Corbyn reflected about that statement, "If you will go to church with me Sunday, asking no questions, I'll introduce him to you." And that night, too, she stayed awake and thought about that statement. She thought she saw light. Here was this engagement ring, a beautiful diamond. And Eloise had made a religious change. And she had said to herself, too, that Eloise's language, in her letter, had indicated she had taken up with the heresy of the so-called "Campbellites," or—else she knew not what. But here was this ring. And Eloise had made a change. And she promised to introduce her mother to the lucky man Sunday at church. Now she thought she saw light. This man, whoever he was, was a member of the church, or the religious clique with which Eloise had identified herself. Perhaps—Yes that was it. Out of love of this man she had been led to make the change. It was becoming plain now. Who was it, after all? And then there flashed in her mind Peter Finwick. She remembered that he had called upon Eloise. And this doctrine sounded like

"Campbellism." Exactly! Now she had solved it. He was the man who had given her the ring.

Mr. Corbyn was snoring at her side when these thoughts ran through her mind. She was irritated at him that he could sleep so soundly. And he obviously had not seen the ring. And she had not mentioned it to him—yet. Eloise had talked with them until bed time. But she would tell him in the morning.

Was Peter Finwick in Andover? Ah, now it was all plain! That was why Eloise had wanted to come to Andover to university instead of going to Goucher College. Certainly! She had been a blind fool. She should have looked into this more thoroughly. Eloise had fooled her. And she had come to Andover to be near this man. Yes, she believed the very first time she saw them together that they were crazy about one another.

Mrs. Corbyn did not sleep until after two o'clock. "Her thoughts of her head upon her bed did greatly trouble her."

On Saturday morning Mrs. Corbyn arose feeling none too well to begin a hard day's shopping. She yawned and stretched for some time before she felt like getting out of bed. When she looked over for her husband she found his place vacant. She looked about the room for him and he was not there. About the time she was dressed and ready to get out for breakfast, which she was informed would be served at eight, her husband came in.

"Well, you are the early bird," Mrs. Corbyn said to him.

"Yes. You seemed to be sleeping so well I slipped out, shaved, and then took a walk. Had an enjoyable bit of morning exercise. The weather is de-

lightful. Spring seems to be on the way now. And I am glad, for the winter just leaving us has been a hard one," Mr. Corbyn said, sitting.

He had a morning paper in his hand and he sat down in a rocker about the time he finished speaking. and prepared to look over the headlines, and, perchance, finding something interesting, to read.

"What time did you get up " Mrs. Corbyn asked her spouse.

"About six," he answered, adjusting his glasses carefully. Mr. Corbyn wore nose glasses, which he carried suspended on a black grosgrain cord. His hair was graying quite a lot, and his mustache, now cropped, always looked neat. He wore a gray business suit. He was pleasingly presentable at all times.

Mrs. Corbyn now looked at her husband with approval.

"Eli, I am almost ready now, and Eloise said for us to be over for breakfast at eight. And it is nearly eight now," Mrs. Corbyn said. "So I suspect you will have to take your paper to breakfast with you instead of reading it here."

"All right. When you are ready let me know," Mr. Corbyn said without looking up.

Breakfast finished, the Corbyn family started for the business section. Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise were going to do some spring shopping, and Mr. Corbyn, after staying with them for a while, had some business engagements in the city. He had a conference in regard to some papers with officials of the American National Bank, with whom he frequently had dealings.

Coats, coats, coats. Dresses and dresses. Hats. Green hats, red hats, brown hats. Hats galore. Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise shopped at all the main department stores, of which there were five. Besides, they

went to some specialty shops. There was one good thing. The Corbyn purse was not short.

Eloise bought a bewitching hat, a pair of hose, two lovely dresses and a spring coat. Mrs. Corbyn beat her daughter out. She bought three dresses, a suit, and two pairs of shoes.

In the afternoon, after having met Mr. Corbyn at lunch and having lunched with him at a hostelry, which was one of Andover's best, where one could enjoy lunch listening to the strain of a special orchestra, Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise sought a rest room. They were in Shanister-Haliburton's magnificent store. The ladies' rest room, the last word in comfort, invited them. On a great overstuffed divan they sat, and rested—and talked. And it was here that Mrs. Corbyn got to her daughter's religious change. The opportunity seemed so good that she could not resist the temptation.

"Tell me, Eloise, what made you take the steps you did in the matter you wrote me about—in being baptized and going off into some other church. And what does it all mean?" Mrs. Corbyn asked.

"Mother dear, we are so tired to talk about that now. And beides, I asked you to be patient about things until after Sunday. Then it will all come out."

"Last night it all dawned upon me," Mrs. Corbyn went on anyway, disregarding her daughter's protest. "I have decided that I know what it all means. You don't want to tell me. But I can guess. And I suspect I know who gave you the diamond ring you are wearing. I have seen him, I am sure," she concluded.

Eloise turned scarlet. But she said nothing at all. Just sat and looked the other way.

"You don't answer me. I am sure that I have guessed close to it. And I feel sure that you have been led to make this change in your religion, turn-

ing your back upon your father and me, just because you are crazy about this fellow. All our love and care have been lavished upon you all through your life, and then you turn round and throw it from you for some one else."

Mrs. Corbyn felt a strong inclination to cry. She did sniffle a little. And if there had not been several women in the room she would have cried freely. And scolded more violently.

"Mother, Mother!" Eloise protested. "You certainly do think but little of my independent power of conviction. You talk like I cannot think and act for myself at all. You either want me to take my religion, ready made, and without asking questions, from you and Father, or from some one else. But thank goodness, I don't do things that way. I do think for myself. I arrived at my conclusion of my own free will. No one unduly influenced me. But I had never been allowed to develop convictions before. My religion was given to me in infancy by god-parents, ready made, like a dress. But that kind would not do for me always. I had to act for myself.

"And there is no need to drag anyone except myself into this thing. I assure you that I think and act for myself.

"As for the one who gave me this ring, I have promised to introduce him tomorrow. And now, Mother dear, please don't aggravate me and spoil our pleasure of being together over these things. I want to love you and to be close to you—if you will let me. And I don't think that I have done anything wrong at all to be scolded about," Eloise said.

She met the point so determinedly that Mrs. Corbyn could not find heart to go on. So she desisted, although she was pained, pained beyond words, at the whole thing. But Eloise was set, and she had a will like an Artemisia.

CHAPTER XVIII

In their room that night after dinner Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn fell to talking about Eloise, her religion and her engagement.

"Did you know the child is engaged?" Mrs. Corbyn asked.

"No," Mr. Corbyn answered. "I had never dreamed that. Who to?"

"To whom?" Mrs. Corbyn corrected. "And that I do not know. I saw a diamond engagement ring on her finger, and I asked her about it. But she did not tell me. She said she would introduec me to him tomorrow. And that is all I know.

"No, it isn't either. I think I get the whole thing clearly enough now. I got to meditating on her religious experience last night while you were asleep, and I thought and thought until suddenly it seemed to dawn upon me that there was a cause somewhere. This step she has taken sounds like the 'Campbellite' heresy. You know that she wrote us she had 'obeyed the gospel,' and that she had been buried in baptism in so doing. She also said that she had not joined any church, that the Lord added her to the church you can read about in the Bible when she did this. Well, it all sounds just like the 'Campbellites.' I knew there was something familiar about it. And suddenly last night I connected this with that young preacher who used to be at Goodnow, preaching for the Cam—Christian Church there.

"And she said to me last night that she would introduce him—meaning the one she is engaged to—at church tomorrow. I wondered why at church Then

I remembered this young fellow Peter Finwick. And today when I tried to get her to tell me she just put me off, and said that she was tired, and she would show him to me tomorrow.

"Well, after I got to our room this afternoon I sat down to read all the church announcements in all three of the daily papers published here. She asked me when I was buying these papers why I wanted all three of them, but I did not tell her. Just said that I wanted to look at the ads and see if any special sales would be on Monday. But when I ran through the church announcements, I found Peter Finwick's name listed. He is preaching for a church here called the Pinehurst Street Church of Christ. And I'll bet that is where she intends to take us to church tomorrow."

"Well, you are quite a detective at solving mysteries, Carrie. And you may have it, all right."

"And this puts a new angle on the case—this business of her being engaged, and probably to a preacher of another church. By George, I always liked that young fellow Finwick! He is a capable lad. And I have had some business dealings within recent months with his father, who was down at Goodnow closing up some contracts with Roger Bascomb, Cy Woods and Herschel Walters. I regard Mr. Finwick as a very high grade fellow, too. A big business man. Speaks with authority for his firm. I was deeply impressed with him. I told him that I knew his son when he preached for a church there. The old gentleman said he was glad to know that I knew his son, and he asked me what the town thought of his boy. Immensely proud of the lad, it's evident. But while I like the lad and also his father, by jove I don't want to give him my daughter. That is, if you have made a good guess."

Mr. Corbyn began to walk nervously up and down the room.

"This business of Eloise's engagement up-set me," he paused to say. Then he resumed his walking.

Mrs. Corbyn sat perfectly quiet, gazing out a window down into the gathering darkness. She looked worn and much older than she had before. Mr. Corbyn walked a bit longer, glancing in the direction of his wife, whose back was almost turned to him as she faced out the window.

"But hang it, Carrie, we'll have to give Eloise up some time. She is as old now as you were when we were married. But you've maybe guessed all wrong. And we'll wait and see who this fellow is. But if it is Finwick, I haven't but one objection to him—and that's his religion. Somehow—I sort of hope it is Finwick, if she is engaged. And yet I don't—It's deucedly hard to think of allowing an only daughter to marry, whether she would marry a doctor, lawyer, preacher, or who," he said.

"I don't want it to be anybody. And Eli, it would be terrible for her to marry a—a Christian preacher!"

Mrs. Corbyn was losing a relish for rolling the morsel of reproach under her tongue, since, in her mind, there was danger of its becoming a family affair. So she began to speak, with some straining to do it, of Peter as a Christian, instead of a 'Campbellite.'

Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn did not sleep a great deal that night. Sleep went from their eyes. The next morning they were somewhat fatigued, instead of being fully rested as they should have been. But in harmony with the statement of Shakespeare that sleep knits up the ravelled sleeve of care, they took the whole matter less seriously in the morning. And by

the time they had breakfasted, they were bright and cheerful again.

Eloise telephoned Peter before her father and mother went over for breakfast on Sunday morning.

"Listen, Peter! I am going to introduce you as my fiance. Don't get excited. I'll do it after church —after church! See. I'll do it just as quietly as I can. But it will have to be done. Mother has seen my ring, and she asked me about it. I promised to tell her who gave it to me today at church.

"No place to tell her, is it, at church with so many people about?" She paused and thought. "No, that can't be done. I'll not introduce you as my fiance. They know you. So you just shake hands with them as you do with all the rest of the folk. And I'll tell mother who it is while you are preaching. I'll whisper it to her. That's what I'll do," she said.

"Just do as best you can about the matter, dear," Peter said. He too was thinking quite a bit, uncertain as to what would be best. But it was evident to his mind that this thing would have to be faced, sooner or later. And he had no disposition to dodge it.

"But, Peter," the voice was tremulous, "don't come near us until after church. Just stay away from us until after church. And—and, can you stay out of sight until time comes to preach " she asked.

"Yes," he said. "I can for this one special day. But, as you know, I am usually busy shaking hands with the folk before the service begins. But I'll stay in the study today until time to begin the eleven o'clock service."

"Well," she said. "And we are not coming to Sunday School. Dad and mother always go to Sunday school at home. But I have told mother that

we will not go to Sunday school today and she agreed. So we'll come in just before the service begins," Eloise said.

She was nervous about it.

After she had hung up the receiver she wondered what his sermon would be. In fact she had wondered that before, and she had intended to ask him. She did want him to say just the right things for this one time, anyway' She started once to go back to the telephone and call him and ask what his subject was. But she decided he would know what to say, and so she let it rest..

The Pinehurst Street Church building was not very large. The vestibule was at a corner of the building. There was a church spire above it, and it was about twelve feet square. There was no other front entrance to the building. However, one entered either from the side street, or from the main street upon which the building faced, which was Pinehurst. So that there were two entrances into the vestibule, both double doors of each of these entrances into the vestibule being narrow, and opening to the outside in conformity with city building ordinances regulating public buildings for safety measures in case of fire. The auditorium being reached by a single set of double doors, whether one entered from Vickers Street or Pinehurst, he had to enter the auditorium through these doors. The song service started with Brother Williston Dudley leading, so Peter took his seat on the narrow rostrum and faced the double doors. As yet Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise had not entered.

It was in the midst of the second song that they came in. The auditorium had a center aisle and two rows of pews. The Corbyn family went to the center

of the auditorium almost and were seated on the left side. While the little congregation had ushers appointed, they were inexperienced and rarely served with any show of grace and ability. So the Corbyn family found seats for themselves, being asked to do so by an elderly brother who acted as an usher at times.

The congregation began on the second verse of the second song, "He Leadeth Me:"

"Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still o'er troubled sea,—
Still 'tis his hand that leadeth me.
He leadeth me, he leadeth me,
By his own hand he leadeth me:
His faithful follow'r I would be,
For by his hand he leadeth me."

Peter sang it with force and volume. Not with gusto, but with fervor. He went through this verse on the bass. Then, when the third verse was begun he took up the tenor. And he followed the tenor through the fourth. He did not one time look in the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise.

The Pinehurst Street Church had such a routine, such a custom of doing things that it was almost a matter of law. If they had varied a great deal some of the members might have been ready to accuse them of departing from the faith. So there were three congregational songs, and then the Scripture reading and prayer. Afterwards another song. The sermon. The Lord's Supper. The contribution. A final song. The benediction.

Accordingly, two songs having been sung, Brother Williston Dudley, who was really a fairly good sing-

er, announced another number publicly (they did not use an announcing board at this time, although it was later adopted, not without some criticism). While Eloise was turning to the number her mother said to her:

"Eloise, you did not tell us where we were coming to church. This is not a Methodist church. This is a Cam—Christian church! I think we had better go," she said, to vex and try her daughter.

"They worship God here according to the New Testament, and they say they are a church of Christ. So why go elsewhere?" Eloise whispered back to her mother.

When the first verse of the song was begun Mrs. Corbyn whispered to her daughter again.

"Well, we'll stay—this time," she said.

"I have seen that man on the rostrum before. Who is it? I am sure you know. His face is familiar!"

"Yes, you have seen him before. That is Peter Finwick, who used to preach at Goodnow. But hush, Mother. You will disgrace us, talking in church," Eloise said.

Mrs. Corbyn knew it was an ill mannered thing to do. And she was rarely guilty in the least way of this sort of offense. But she did not care a great deal if she did shock her daughter, for she was being tried today. And she resented it. Of all things, her daughter to lead her into this kind of situation! Her being a good devout Methodist! Surely the girl was madly in love with this young man. That had been her guess since she had reached Andover. And now it was all proving true.

Peter caught Eloise's eye during the singing of

the third song. He smiled at her ever so faintly, being on guard, and keeping his ministerial dignity.

He rose to read his text, and read with a sonorous, clear, distinct voice. But there was not the least bit of affectation. He did not mock through sophistication in reading the word of God. He was too reverent and natural for that.

Peter almost violated a custom that day. It had been a long time since he had asked the congregation to do so. But on this occasion he asked the congregation to stand for prayer. In Andover among the churches of Christ this was unusual. So when the congregation stood to pray one old brother, Brother Hartsel, sitting well down front, got down on his knees instead. He was wedded to his custom, and the posture of the body had come to occupy a prominent place in his mind. Peter remarked this. He appreciated the reverence which moved Brother Hartsell, but he did not like to see him wedded to a custom until he thought that custom to be law.

Peter's personal conviction was that one could pray kneeling, pray walking, pray lying down, pray in any posture of the body. And while he preferred the idea of kneeling as a symbol of humility, he did not think that the Bible had specifically taught upon that question. It was left to the creature man. But Peter was cautious. He did not keep up a string of surprises. He knew it would tell upon the older, more settled minds in the congregation. He knew that certain ones wished to have the order of the services conform to what they had been used to "back home." Such a power is custom! So little are we the boasted freemen that we say we are.

Peter did have power. And he used it tellingly. His sermon was a masterpiee. He had never preached better, and perhaps never as well before. He wanted

to transcend himself. And after the services a number of the members told him that he had. He used a general theme of Christian living that would cross nobody, however hetrodox as to the ordinances of the New Testament he might be. He stressed the power of a Christian life as the power that God could use unto his glory. He pleaded for a consecration to God. For clean hands and clean hearts. He took up the life of service of the meek and lowly Nazarene. He extolled his virtures. Having a fine descriptive ability, and capable in glowing narrative, he traced the life of Christ from the beginning of his ministry until the time of his sacrificial death, and emphasized the life of service which Christ lived. And he urged the need of seeking to be unselfish and of so living that God could use the members unto his honor and glory.

Mrs. Corbyn, however unwilling to own it, felt herself desiring to be less selfish. She followed the glow and the fire of the preacher and her heart was softned a great deal. Her enmity was being gradually erased with the love of the great leader of men, the Lord Jesus Christ. One thing was certain, and that was that she could not sit under the sound of the voice of Peter Finwick as he preached the gospel of personal purity and service and unselfishness and be hardboiled in her heart against him. She could not follow his vivid narrative, while the scenes of Calvary were reenacted, and hate the preacher who was delivering the message.

Freer from prejudice from the start, Mr. Corbyn enjoyed the sermon immensely.

Eloise was beatific. She beamed unspeakable happiness. And her intention of whispering to her mother that Peter was her fiance deserted her. She simply did not get to it. She decided she would have

to do it later. And so she reserved the secret, putting off "the evil hour."

When the service was concluded, Peter Finwick followed his custom of going to the double doors at the entrance to the auditorium and personally greeting every one who was present. He used both hands to shake hands as the audience left. And he missed none, not even the children.

In this line he caught Mr. and Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise.

"Mother, you remember Mr. Finwick, do you not?" Eloise asked as she came to Peter.

"Yes, I remember him," Mrs. Corbyn said, extending a hand.

"How are you, Mrs. Corbyn? So glad to see you'" Peter said as he grasped her hand in a firm clasp.

"And Mr. Corbyn," he said, extending a hand some length to reach the latter, who was behind. "Glad to see you. Glad to meet old friends again."

He seemed so genial, enthusiastic and sincere that he imparted his own warmth of greeting. He continued to put in a word now and then to the Corbyns as he held them back, and continued to shake hands with others who were leaving in between times. And still he missed nobody at all.

Mr. Corbyn seemed natural, and pleased at the meeting.

Eloise had done a fine thing in bringing her parents to church that they might hear her fiance. Much prejudice had been removed—more than could have been removed under other circumstances in a long time.

Eloise introduced her parents to some other members, and managed, almost inadvertently, to have them delayed, until Peter had finished shaking hands

with every one. Then he came on the scene and conversation started again.

"How is everything in Goodnow, Mr. Corbyn " Peter asked.

"About the same, I believe. Not many changes. And say, I had the privilege of meeting your father a short time ago."

"You did?" Peter enquired. "Father did not write me that he was down your way. I am glad you met him. He's a great dad, if I do say it."

"Yes, I liked your father very much. He was down in the interest of his company to close some timber contracts with some of the patrons of my bank. I took care of their end of it, at their request, and my contact with your father was very agreeable. He is a good business man, not narrow and greedy, but broad and genteel. We traded and closed the contracts with the finest of feelings. But you know, all really good business men, while ready to drive a hard bargain, are really very affable and agreeable fellows."

"And your father seemed pleased when I told him that I knew you," Mr. Corbyn said.

Eloise had engaged her mother in conversation with some one, and she was trying to catch the conversation of her father and Peter and of her mother and the woman she was talking to at the same time. And so she really succeeded at neither.

As the Corbyns were leaving Peter asked them how long they would remain in Andover. He really addressed Mr. Corbyn, and it was she who replied.

"We are leaving tomorrow," she said.

"Well, I am very glad I could see you again," Peter said.

"We are planning to drive about over the city a

bit this afternoon, and we would like to come by for you," Eloise said to Peter.

"I'd just be delighted," he answered.

There had been no plans made, except in Eloise's mind, and now that she came right out with it, Mrs. Corbyn was aghast. She wanted to deny it, but she was not that uncivil by nature, and she smilingly repeated the request. And so it was arranged.

But Eloise did get her scolding for her bit of impertinence. She took it with good nature. She could afford to. She had triumphed.

To disarm prejudice Peter knew to be an Herculean task. And he also knew that afternoon at the end of the long ride through the parks and down the avenues of the city of Andover that he had accomplished a large part of that task.

Mrs. Corbyn began to admit to herself that she liked him. He was genteel, polished and—and handsome! And that was not wasted on Mrs. Corbyn any more than it was on her daughter.

CHAPTER XIX

At the end of the long ride late that Sunday afternoon Mrs. Corbyn and her daughter sat in Mrs. Chisholm's living room. It was nearly six o'clock. But the place seemed to be nearly deserted. Mrs. Chisholm had a late Sunday dinner, which was served usually about half past two in the afternoon, and then she had no other meal that day. The girls who boarded with her, of whom there were about a dozen, usually went out for a dish of ice cream or some light refreshment Sunday evening, though, feeling that they could not get through very well until Monday morning. And so the place was almost deserted.

Mr. Corbyn felt that he was tired enough that he would like to rest a bit. And so he had crossed to Mrs. Steel's to his room, and had fallen across the bed to relax, and possibly to doze.

"Dear, I want to talk to you," Mrs. Corbyn said, "and we are leaving in the morning and I'll not have a chance. So we had better try to talk a while now.

"You have not yet told me who it is to whom you are engaged, but I think I know.

"This is a serious matter, not to be entered lightly, Eloise, and I want you to be sure. You may regret the step you are contemplating taking sometime," Mrs. Corbyn said.

"I know it is a serious step, Mother. And I think you are warning me about the matter because you do not approve the choice I have made. You say you think you know who it is. I suspect you do. But I have thought about it, and I think I am certain—as certain as I could be about anything."

"What will your friends think, Eloise, when they hear that you have married a preacher of the 'Campbellite' church?" Mrs. Corbyn asked.

"I don't care what they think. And he is not a 'Campbellite.' He claims to be only a Christian—a member of the Church of Christ. He says that is all that he cares to be," Eloise replied with some warmth.

"Anyway, what will they think?" Mrs. Corbyn insisted.

"Mother, if he were a Methodist preacher, I think you would not object. And that is just where I cannot see that you are consistent. In fact, you are inconsistent. You say, I have heard you say it a number of times in life, that one church is as good as another. You say that one can be saved in one church the same as in another. So if the church makes no difference, if one is as good as another, and a person can be saved in one as well as another, then why draw the line because he is not a member of the Methodist Church?" Eloise argued.

"It isn't just that, Eloise. Can't you understand? If your love did not make you blind you could. If he were in the Methodist Church he would have so much more 'standing,' and he would have a chance for greater promotion. He might go right on up, and with plenty of pull, and influence behind him, he might become a bishop. But as it is he can never become a very great man in point of standing and authority. The people Mr. Finwick (she named him for the first time, but they had been talking with perfect understanding on that point) is associated with as a class are not so prominent. Naturally he limits his opportunity by affiliating with them. And if you should go and marry him, which will be over my objection, you will not be elevating yourself as you

should, and as you doubtless could. That's my viewpoint, dear," Mrs. Corbyn said.

"And that is just what makes me appreciate him more, Mother. He is honest and sincere. I think he is like Moses in that respect, who, it was said, 'had rather suffer afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.'

"And he has ability, you will grant. I believe he has more ability and is a better speaker, and that he also knows the Bible better, than any Methodist preacher I ever heard, not even excepting Bishop Fogle. And he is young. He will grow better as a speaker all the time," Eloise said.

"Yes. I know he has ability. If he had the right connections he would go far. But as it is, how can he? Think of the little old building he preaches in. That's against him," Mrs. Corbyn said.

"He has just begun where he is, Mother. It will not be long until that old building is torn down and a good, large new one is put up. You see, we (she used the 'we' easily) have a large tract of ground, all the room we need for a good, nice, modern church building, and we'll get it, I know. Peter and I have already been talking over the plans for the building."

"Maybe you will get a good large church building, and maybe you will not. You know it takes money to build houses, and I am afraid that his little congregation will not have money enough for that," Mrs. Corbyn said, with some ire and some sarcasm.

"Mother, all things nearly can grow. You must remember that the Methodist Church has not always been strong. Yes, you must remember that there has not always been a Methodist Church. It dates only from the time of John Wesley, while the Church of Christ was founded by the Lord through his

apostles, and it has been in existence much longer. But of course there was the great apostasy that we know in history as the Dark Ages. After the Dark Ages then the Reformation, which produced Protestantism. And the Methodist Church is a part of that. What we want to do is to go back beyond the Dark Ages, go back beyond the days of Protestantism, to the very days of the apostles, and there study about the Church of Christ from the Bible. And what we learn about that church we ought to practice. And we ought not to be at all concerned about man-made standards and social prominence that may be gained or had in certain connections. Our search for the truth in the maze of the world's doubts, and confuion worse confounded, in the maze of denominationalism, ought to lead us to disregard all the false standards that have been raised and that now divide the world. What ought we to care for what others think if we are following the Bible and doing what Christ wants done?

"And as to growing again, let me say that correct position which the Church of Christ holds will make it prominent in the earth long after Methodism shall have been forgotten. The Church of Christ can, and will grow, for it is a divine institution. It has all the ear-marks of genuiness. And that is enough for me," Eloise concluded.

Not long before, when Peter preached the series of sermons on the Church, its organization, its practice, etc., he preached these very sentiments, and they had come to Eloise's mind to stay. She in turn used them very tellingly on her mother.

"Such ideas, Eloise! Such ideas! I would not have thought you would have had such thoughts," Mrs. Corbyn said. But despite her statement she was

affected. This was putting a new light on things. And her argument had been destroyed by an appeal to more elemental things than social positions.

Mrs. Corbyn had intended to reproach her daughter for her stand in religious matters. But Eloise diverted that, inadvertently, by revealing her mind's trend. Her sincerity was apparent, and her faith bold and firm. Not a mere shadow, this. Not taken merely to get her man. Originally she would have taken the doctrine to get the man, but she unconsciously learned the truth of the position which Peter occupied in the mean time. And her elemental sense of fairness which came largely from her father caused her to take the doctrine on its own merits.

"Mother, ideas are very powerful things. I got to struggling with the idea of the Church as the Lord designed it, and it converted me to the truth. I see now clearly what I used to have no conception of. The Lord established His Church. He said He would And He did—through the apostles on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of His precious body from the dead. And the Lord is head of that Church. It is His. It does not belong to John Wesley, or to Alexander Campbell, or to any one else. And it ought to wear the name of Christ. We ought to all be members of the Church of Christ and of no other church. If all were just Christians, and members of the Church of Christ, and if all, furthermore, would do just what Christ has authorized to be done in the New Testament, then all would be of one heart and one faith, just as Jesus prayed that they would be," Eloise said.

"Then there ought not to be any Methodist Church?" Mrs. Corbyn asked, almost in a sneer.

"There is not anything said about the Methodist

Church in the Bible, Mother. And I believe that we ought to follow the Bible—without addition or subtraction."

Mrs. Corbyn began to get angry. Losing the argument, which had not been intended when she started with her daughter, she began to boil.

"Yes. That's just it. Turn your back upon your father and mother, and upon their religion, for this—this heretical preacher who has put such notions in your head. I'm—"

"Mother," Eloise interposed, "now please don't get yourself all worked up, for you will likely say things that you will regret. I don't want you to do that. But I see though that we are hopelessly divided. Our thoughts are not at all alike.

"But we should not be enemies because of that."

"My own daughter against me. The little girl I used to coddle and almost worship against me!" Mrs. Corbyn belated and began to cry into her handkerchief.

Eloise went over to her mother and threw her arms about her.

"No, no, Mother. I am for you—100 per cent for you. I am for you stronger than ever. But, Momsey (using her little pet name), you wouldn't want me to be for you in the wrong, would you? You would want me to think for myself, wouldn't you? But there, there, now! Let's don't talk about it."

Mrs. Corbyn was experiencing what so many parents are unable to bear with patience—the free growth and mental life, independent and unafraid, of their own children. Perhaps from looking after them for twenty years, less or more, parents think they should look after their children always and think their thought for them to the end. They are not always

ready to concede independence and maturity to their offspring.

"Oh, dear! I am so disappointed. I had thought it might all be otherwise. I had planned big things for you, Eloise. I thought you would marry Arthur Jenkins. He is in the law now, and he is doing well, they say. He is of a fine family. Some day, with our influence and money, and with the influence of his family, he may go to Congress. But you throw the whole plan away on a preacher of a—a—of an insignificant church."

"I had rather live in poverty with Peter Finwick than to live in a mansion with Arthur Jenkins. And talking about families, Peter's family is a higher, more honorable family than Arthur's. I know. I have met his mother and been in his home," Eloise said.

"When?" Mrs. Corbyn asked, astonished.

"Last Summer when I was visiting Ruth Satterfield in Balmoreck," Eloise replied simply.

"Yes, you've been scheming on this thing and running it for a long time. You knew he was coming here to Andover when you asked to come here to school last fall, too.

"What a fool I've been! I have been perfectly blind. But I thought I was being a good mother, and giving you advantages, and what you wanted, and you were using these things all the time to please yourself. You were 'working' me."

"Mother, it is true that I knew he would come here and begin work with the Pinehurst Street Church when I asked you to let me come here. But it is also true that I wanted to be closer to home than I was last year, even as I said. I did not deceive you on that point. And as to the matter of loving Peter, I—I could not help it!"

"That may be all true. But now it is done," Mrs. Corbyn said with a great sigh. She dropped her hands into her lap, and looked utterly beaten and hopeless.

"Mother," Eloise began, tenderly, "have you forgotten how you used to love Daddy? You told me about it one time. Now that is the way I love—and for you to oppose it would break my heart. I want you and Daddy—and Peter! Why can't I have all three without any fuss over it, Momsey?"

In the parlance of the prize ring, that appeal was a knockout.

"Give us your blessing, Mother dear, and let it go at that."

"Not now, sweetheart," Mrs. Corbyn said and sighed again.

"Then I'll appeal to Dad. He's big hearted and generous. I'll tell him all about it, and he'll see the point."

CHAPTER XX

Anthony Jordan, who was preaching for the South Sterrett Street Church of Christ in Andover, was in trouble up to his neck, so to speak. All the reasons he did not know. But some of them were traceable to his rival, who had actually stooped to "dirty work." It came up, partly at least, over the matter of taking members, by hook, or crook, from the Hanford Street Church.

Anthony Jordan had known Mr. and Mrs. Willis and their niece, Miss Burk, in another place. He had known them for years and years. So when they moved to Andover in the interest of a livelihood Brother Anthony Jordan felt that he had a right to them above everybody else. For a while they did go to church at South Sterrett Street. But later they moved over in the eastern part of the city, and then, finding it very much more convenient for them to do so, decided to go over and place their membership with the Hanford Street Church. It seemed to them to be a matter of choice.

Mr. and Mrs. Willis and Miss Burk were absent from South Sterrett Street for two Sundays before it was sufficiently impressed on Brother Jordan's attention to see about them. He went, therefore, to see what was the matter. He did not know whether they were sick, or had some other misfortune.

Only Mrs. Willis was at home. Brother Jordan had the new address through a friend who was also a member of South Sterrett Street Church.

"Well, Sister Willis, I have missed you for two Sundays from South Sterrett, and I thought I had better come and see about you," Brother Jordan said,

after the greeting, and after they were comfortably seated in the living room.

"Yes," Mrs. Willis said, in agreement. "We are now closer to Hanford Street Church (she colored as she faced the necessity of saying so, for she had anticipated that Brother Jordan would feel this way about her, her husband and their niece), and we have been over there for the last two Sundays."

"Why, Sister Willis—ahem—ahem—I wish you hadn't done that—deserted us at South Sterrett, so to speak. You know, I have known you good folks so long that it just seems like you belong to us—personally. We think we have all the claim on you, from every standpoint. Besides, we have a much smaller membership than they have over at Hanford Street Church, and we need you so much worse. Won't you come on over there, anyway, even if it is a little farther?" he pleaded.

On the basis of personal friendship, and through his pleading, so like the pleading of a dog for a bone, so animal-like, so pathetic, Brother Jordan was well nigh irresistable. He left complete victor for the nonce.

While it was inconvenient for them to board the cars and transfer to reach South Sterrett Street Church, Mr. and Mrs. Willis did go back to that place to church the next Sunday. However, they went without Miss Burk, for she had now made the acquaintance of the younger folk of the Hanford Street Church, and she wanted to be with them. She believed they were a better group to associate with than the young people at South Sterrett Street. She had urged the move to the new location with a view to going to Hanford Street to church. And now that she had achieved the desired end, she was unwilling

to let it slip merely on the basis of Brother Jordan's personal friendship for the family.

There was a feeling of jealousy and rivalry between Avery Sutton and Anthony Jordan, and it only wanted some such opportunity as now presented itself to come out.

The absence of one Sunday from Hanford Street Church was enough to bring Brother Sutton to see Mr. and Mrs. Willis. Brother Sutton had ascertained that Mr. and Mrs. Willis had gone back to South Sterrett Street to church though the urging of Brother Jordan. Miss Burk, upon being asked by Brother Sutton concerning the absence of her uncle and aunt, told the truth right out, without thought of any consequences.

Anyway, Brother Sutton made it a point to call upon Mr. and Mrs. Willis one evening.

"We are mighty glad to have you close to Hanford Street Church, Brother Willis," Brother Sutton began, in leading up to the subject that was the occasion of his visit. "But we missed you last Sunday."

"Yes, we went back to South Sterrett last Sunday. Brother Jordan wanted us to, especially. You know, he has been a friend of the family for a long time, and he kind of feels that we ought not to leave him down at South Sterrett. And we like to go down there, too. But we also like to come to Hanford Street. We are just a bit uncertain what we should do," Brother Willis replied.

"Of course I can see how you would feel about it, Brother Willis, and especially with Brother Jordan pulling on you. Now I don't think he ought to do that. He ought to leave you free to go where you please, and worship where you please. This is a free country, you know," Brother Sutton said.

"Well, it seems that we are needed worse down

at South Sterrett too. They have a smaller membership than you do at Hanford Street. And that makes a difference. And in addition to all of this, when we came to Andover we went at once to Brother Jordan's and stayed for a few days until we got straightened out to keep house. And we feel very close to Brother Jordan."

"Yes, I can see how you would feel on that score, but you ought not to have that hanging over your head. If it is far more convenient for you to come to Hanford Street, Brother Jordan ought not to say a word. That's the way I feel about it. And as to their membership being smaller, that may be true. But, on the other hand, do we not need one strongly centralized congregation in this city, which can put us up on a par with others? You know, this is a day of large organizations. Only the big things constitute news. We cannot get publicity, and be recognized very much until we get some strength in some one congregation. Now we could have had just such strength, and centralization, as would have made outstanding achievement possible before this if we had not been swarming too often. In my judgment it would be better to have fewer congregations with larger, better houses, and larger Bible schools, so as to give us some prominence in this day of super-organizations, than to have a lot of smaller ones dotted about. These smaller units have very little influence. They are not good for newspaper publicity, and so on. Ever since I have been in Andover I have been preaching centralization. And there has also been a lot of agitation for de-centralization. And so far we have been unable to build a single outstanding congregation. About the time it looks like we are going to, then some one leads off a band and starts another congregation somewhere in the city, or in some

nearby suburb. Just now a strong clique is aggitating the starting of a congregation out in Norwood.

"I'll tell you what my opinion is, Brother Willis. I think it would be a good thing if South Sterrett Church and Pinehurst Street both would return to Hanford Street from whence they went out.

"So don't let Brother Jordan disturb you on the ground that you are needed down at South Sterrett. You are also needed at Hanford Street. And if you had rather come to Hanford Street, why just come. And let Brother Jordan do the best he can about it," Brother Sutton said.

Brother Sutton did not say that he thought the Western Parkway Church should also return to Hanford Street. He did not think the folk of that little congregation could add anything to Hanford Street. For the most part they were too poor, and shabby. He thought it best that they should remain just where they were.

"I do not quite agree with you, Brother Sutton, about the idea of centralization," Brother Willis said. "I think it better to have several congregations in a city the size of Andover than to have one large one. You know, you can give more people something to do in the number we have than you could in one. And then too, a lot of children attend the Bible schools of the different congregations just because they are in the communities where the congregations are. And people attend the services of the various congregations in the same way. I think it is good that we have all four (he included Western Parkway in the count) congregations in the city.

"But I do not deny the advantages that come through having a larger unit.

"And now in regard to our attendance—we want

to come to Hanford Street Church. We enjoy it there. And we are close. And we intend to come there, but I suspect we'll have to go down to South Sterrett at times. I think you can see how that is," Brother Willis said.

"I want to urge you to help us to build one strong church in the city of Andover, Brother Willis, and to come on and be with us at every service possible. Don't let Brother Jordan unduly influence you in this matter. I think he ought to let you alone in the matter to do what you think is best," Brother Sutton said.

"I am coming to Hanford Street, Brother Sutton," Miss Burk spoke up. "I am for you!"

"Good! You have the right idea," Brother Sutton said.

The conversation was diverted into another line. But again before leaving Brother Sutton urged the Willises to come on to Hanford Street regardless of what Brother Jordan might think. His insistence was also felt. The Willises felt themselves between two fires. And they thought they could detect a bit of rivalry and jealousy between the two men. Strange how such things insist on protruding through actions and on showing themselves between lines.

Spring having arrived with her verdant green, with bursting buds and the songs of birds; with balmy breezes and bright skies; with the surge of nature that drew nature-lovers out into the open on hikes, on canters, on picnic parties, Mr. and Mrs. Willis had an invitation to go out to Temple Park with a group of the members from Hanford Street Church on the Tuesday following Brother Sutton's visit. Brother Sutton had sufficiently impressed his invitation upon the Willises to attend Hanford Street that they were

there the Sunday following his visit. And it was then that they received the invitation. It was rather a select group. And the Willises were glad to be in it.

It was only too evident that the Sutton concept was to throw some social life into the attendance at Hanford Street for the Willises. And it was being worked out.

This plan, while it was doing what was intended, could not be outstripped by Brother and Sister Jordans' ingenuity.

And here it is in place to tell the part that Mrs. Jordan took in such matter. She was a small, well-formed dark-eyed woman with graying hair. She had a tilted chin, a tilted nose, and a vacant, uncertain light in her eyes. But they could flash. All of which showed she had temper—and a dangerous way. She was decidedly hard to balk. She was a warm second to her nervous husband. Capable of hysteria, or brain-storms of passion, she drew the line at nothing under being radical. She had soon established that reputation after reaching Andover. Also, she had an unfortunate way of regarding little acts of various people as having a significance that those acts were not intended to convey. She was too easily aggrieved. She had a morbid sensitiveness that made her recoil upon herself. She kept a large part of the members of South Sterrett yapping like a bunch of coyotes over little matters until they learned her. She was nearly always "miffed" at some one in the congregation. And she never let her husband rest over these little things. Naturally, therefore, when the knowledge of the danger of losing the Willises came to Mrs. Jordan she was up in the air.

Brother Jordan had been mismated. He did not have a good preacher's wife. A preacher's wife ought

to be a paragon of all the virtues. She ought not to be sensitive. She must not be partial. In other words, she must be almost more than human to carry her part. All the virtues and all the graces, social, and otherwise, will not be too much.

Like Jezebel, who stirred up Ahab, Mrs. Jordan stirred up her husband. And not always for the best. He would have been fairly successful if he had had a good partner. He was wise to his wife's faults, in a measure, but he never knew, poor man, how much they handicapped him.

Upon hearing about the Willises Mr. Jordan planned to have them at her house for dinner the next Sunday. She rarely had dinners for anybody. But this was a special occasion. And the Willises were special friends. So she called Mrs. Willis over telephone and asked the three of them to come down for dinner next Sunday.

Of course they could not think of accepting her invitation without attending services at South Sterrett. And there was the catch. Mrs. Willis saw it. And she did not rebel merely on that account. So she accepted the invitation.

Mrs. Jordan could not wait until after the dinner was over until she blazed away on the subject from which she was scorching. Brother Jordan followed her bitter denunciation of Brother Sutton and the Hanford Street Church with a strong appeal on their personal friendship.

The thing was getting serious. A man could not seem to possess his own soul. The Willises were worried. Miss Burk was not. She had attended the Willises that Sunday for the dinner. But as soon as she had finished her meal, she wandered from the dining room and straightway forgot it. She was set in her

mind. She would go to Hanford Street Church, come what might.

And Miss Burk was just resentful enough of the attitude of Mr. and Mrs. Jordan, and disgusted enough, to tell, the same week, what mean things had been said by Mrs. Jordan, especially, against Brother Sutton. That started the ball to rolling.

As the devil would have it, there then soon came an opportunity for Brother Sutton to tell one of the main men from South Sterrett what he thought about the Jordans, and especially about Mrs. Jordan.

"Mrs. Jordan is nearly insane," Brother Sutton confided to Brother Bills, who was the before mentioned leader at South Sterrett. "She has always made trouble for her husband everywhere they have been. Now I have this upon good authority. At ....., where they were just before coming here, they divided the church; tore it into shreds. And sooner or later you will have just that sort of trouble here. I hate to see it, but I know it is coming. I can see it. Can't you?" he asked.

"I am afraid I can," Brother Bills said. "The time is about here for renewing Brother Jordan's contract, and I doubt very seriously if we elders are going to renew it, because of just such things. In fact, I feel certain that we will not. And I believe I can tell what will happen."

This news of the attitude of the elders of the South Sterrett Street Church came to Peter. He knew that it had come out of this wrangling over members who were not allowed to do as they pleased. Brother Sutton had subtlely taken it up with the leaders at South Sterrett, and had already arranged to put skids under his brother preacher. Brother Jordan was due to lose his job.

The strange way of friendships among members in the various congregations of a city works both ways. These friendships can boost a work and a preacher on up higher into universal esteem, or else they can tear him down with equal power. And if a man, employed with a church, is not big enough for the job the fact has a way of getting out. Such things cannot be hidden. If he does the work very satisfactorily, the news also has a way of getting out. And a just estimate is formed of preachers by the members in general, regardless of how much certain preachers, because they occupy for a while certain pulpits, may think of themselves. Preachers are usually rated for what they are worth—notwithstanding what they may think of themselves when fortune may seem to smile upon them for a while. If all preachers could know this, it would save much vain striving to be what one is not and cannot become, much egotism that will bring the possessor to the rocks and the shoals.

One of the friendships that put Peter Finwick immediately in touch with what was going to happen to Brother Jordan, of whom a just estimate had been formed, regardless of his striving to equal the prestige of his brother preacher, Avery Sutton, was the beforementioned friendship of Brother Bills, one of the elders of the South Sterrett Street Church, for Royal Davis, one of the deacons of the Pinehurst Street Church.

Brother Davis confided the state of affairs to Peter Finwick, and deprecated the trouble that had started.

"They are going to ruin Jordan", said Brother Davis. "I told George—George Bills, that they are going to. I asked him if there was not some other way around it. He said that they just could not re-

tain him, both on his own and his wife's account. He is slated for a change."

"Have they told Brother Jordan that they are going to let him out?" asked Peter.

"No."

"That's the pity of it, then," said Peter. "If they don't tell him right up to the last minute, and then undertake to let him out, he may raise a disturbance, and refuse to go. Preachers have done such a thing. But if he does go, dismissed out of a racket, his reputation will be hurt dreadfully."

"That's just what I had in mind when I said he would be ruined," Brother Davis said. "You see, they have been dissatisfied with him for some time, on account of the way he and Mrs. Jordan stir up things, but they have been putting up with it. Now they have about reached the limit of endurance. And I suspect that Brother Sutton is behind this thing. I have gathered he is. And I am sorry to hear that. I think preachers ought not to have jealousy in their systems. It hurts churches."

"They have never seemed to get along, I have understood," Peter said.

Afterwards Peter could not forget the impending catastrophe. He knew the temperament of Anthony Jordan well enough to know that bad trouble was ahead unless something was done.

The next day Peter sat and meditated upon the thing for some time. And then he decided he would take the bull by the horns and do something about it.

He telephoned Brother Jordan to meet him down town for lunch.

"I want to talk to you in a heart-to-heart fashion," Peter said, when they were seated in a restaurant that

had enclosures for tables along the wall on one side. Not wholly inclosed, but partitions were placed to insure privacy. At one of these tables they were when Peter began. "You've got trouble brewing for you, Brother Jordan—bad trouble at that, I am afraid. And I suspect that it is so well defined and certain that you can not placate it, or mollify it sufficiently to overcome it. I think you will have to meet it in another way."

"What is it?" Brother Jordan asked.

"The elders down at South Sterrett are determined to let you out, Brother Jordan. I am sure they are, from what I have heard."

"I have just heard the same thing," Brother Jordan said. "And it has made me sick. I don't think I deserve this sort of treatment. After I heard it, from good authority, I went to Brother Hackworth, the one elder who seems to be friendly out of the five we have, and I asked him what about it. He told me he thought the others were set to do it. And I have about decided to fight it—to the last ditch," he said.

"I don't think you can afford that, Brother Jordan. That is just exactly what I feared you would plan to do. And it would be disastrous. You know, if a church gets into a disturbance over a preacher, and they get into a big fuss, if the preacher fights back he puts himself on the same plane with them. And another thing is true; if he does fight them and the church is divided, the preacher is ruined as well as the church. Thereafter a preacher cannot get another congregation to take hold of him. If he does, he'll have a hard time.

"No, Brother Jordan. I think you will have to be bigger than they are, and show them that you are by resigning before they get a chance to cut your throat.

You will come out winner in the long run. It is by far the best thing to do.

"I hate to think of your leaving Andover. You have done a good work here, and you have many warm friends. And unfortunately you have some bitter enemies. Keep your friends, and do not prostitute their friendship for you by engaging them in a fight for you. And love your enemies enough to show them how little you care. This spirit will win out.

"A preacher, of all men, must live by good will. And that is what makes his life so uncertain in one place. His enemies, if he has the misfortune to make some, will work to get his job. That is the devil's strong weapon in their hand. They have the advantage—if they think you care deeply! It delights them to show you how they can treat you. But if you laugh at them, and then forget it, they are whipped in the long run."

"But, Brother Finwick, I don't have a place to go," Brother Jordan protested.

"That doesn't make much difference to a man of your standing. You can find a place. Do you have any meetings engaged for this summer?"

"Yes. I have four meetings booked," Brother Jordan answered.

"Well, hold them. And in the meantime try to engage more. And then put in your time from now until next fall trying for a new location. I am sure you will have to anyway, unless things change with you here.

"I know of a place that needs a good man. It is a good strong church, even better than the one you are with, in a good city. I know several of the leaders quite well. I'll write them this very afternoon, and recommend you for the place," Peter said.

"I certainly would be glad to make a change before they get a chance to cut my head off here. And it would be a good thing to me to get to go to a good place from here. How I would like to show them that I don't have to depend upon them, and that they cannot ruin me by letting me out in this disgraceful fashion."

"Don't let them get that far with it. Call a meeting of the elders and resign before they get a chance," Peter replied.

"But I don't want to leave Andover. I hate to be run off," Brother Jordan said.

"Then in that case resign just the same, and start a mission out in Norwood. Some of the folk are talking of starting a work out there anyway. Several members live out there, and they are anxious for it. You would draw mostly from Hanford Street, and then you would get a few from Pinehurst, and a list of your friends from South Sterrett."

"By Jove, that's what I'll do!" Brother Jordan said. "And we'll show 'em. It will be but a little while until we have a good congregation. And if it pulls from Sutton, I don't care a rap. In fact, I would be glad of it. I think he is having something to do with my situation anyway."

And that was the way it worked out. Thus was the fifth congregation born in that section of the country. It cut to Avery Sutton's heart, but he was conscious that he helped to force it, when, therefore, about fifty members from Hanford Street Church left him to assist in the new work, he admitted to himself that he had cut off his nose to spite his face. It was wholly gratuitous for him to engage in putting skids under his brother preacher. And so he was paid for it.

CHAPTER XXI

Evangelist Wilks Barton had taught Peter Finwick an invaluable lesson. Nor had it been intended. It was not conveyed orally and with the intention of teaching Peter a lesson. It had come from keen observation. Peter watched and studied the man and his methods when he was associated with him at Goodnow. Never a note of pessimism escaped Evangelist Wilks Barton while he was in his meetings. But every good point that could be construed as favoring the success of the meeting he happily seized upon and played it up before the people. And they were encouraged and inspired as it was meant that they should be.

Wilks Barton spoke of the number of visitors present at each service from distant points. How he could make this point stand out! He spoke of the increase in the audiences. He spoke of the good song service. And in the midst of the songs sometimes he would rise and stir his audience to the depths. He had the personality and the "pep" to do so. Verve was in every tone, in every inflection and modulation of every tone, in his movements. He acted as a soul on fire. And yet he was so possessed that he did not lose himself. His emotions were controlled. He used them to arouse the emotions of his auditors. This power a preacher needs.

Peter came to term it "congregational psychology." And what Wilks Barton did in a specific sense Peter came to do at all times, both publicly and privately. He began to use with a definite purpose, not blindly, this note of optimism, of prophecy of good things to come.

In Andover and among the members of the Pinehurst Street Church he applied this practical psychology. In the congregation he had some despondent folks who could "make a mountain out of a molehill" when it came to seeing evil in the lives of the members or to discussing some unfavorable event. But Peter never, never allowed any such note of pessimism to get by him. If it should develop in a private conversation, he would not leave the point until he had set the mind of the person involved upon a happier course of thinking. Naturally, this had the very essence of success. Just as the opposite way of thinking and of encouraging to think, would have equally destroyed. Peter well knew that he could kill privately in casual conversations, over a period of time, what he **would accomplish** in the pulpit. He knew that success of the church work depended upon many things. But a sound plan of thinking was always necessary. It had to be taught the whole membership.

Peter sometimes made public use of this power to correct some evil that was growing. He watched the life of the Pinehurst Street Church with a vigilant eye. No matter was too small for his attention and time if it troubled some one, even one of the most insignificant of the members.

The "morale" of the Pinehurst Street Church was at the highest possible point within six months after Peter began work in the city of Andover. He had built it. And hardly any one knew how it was done. But Peter knew. It was the price of vigilance, and of the first law of success—the law of service, the law which Jesus emphasized as the basic law of his kingdom. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great

exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Peter's life of service easily led him to the front. He began to be spoken of as an avowed and admitted success in a very short time. Even the other preachers of the town began to admit that he was a success. Everything proved it. As Thomas Carlisle one time said about humanity, God had so established the law of things that we could not fail to honor those whom we should honor. Water seeks its level. And a man naturally gravitates to his place in this nicely laid and vast scheme of things. While there are those who are envious of the success of others it does not mean that there is justice in their criticism of the success of another.

This insistent sort of propaganda, if it can be called that, this seizing of the congregational psychology, this training of the minds of the members to think in a given channel and toward a given conclusion bore fruit. This power of leadership of men and women, vouchsafed to Peter, made him successful.

Peter followed no standard. But he certainly followed, in his own independent way, the laws of success.

His own predominant will shaped and molded the congregational perspective. But why try to describe this intangible thing we call personality, which plays upon other personalities as the deft fingers of the skilled musician upon the strings of the harp? And why try to picture it in order that all others may understand it and imitate it? It is as Jesus said, "It

shall be given those for whom it is prepared of my Father in heaven."

One of the outstanding points of agitation, of sowing the seeds of constructive thinking for all to think by, was with reference to the future of the Pinehurst Street Church. Peter never left this off. Always the future of that church was the greatest. But it was not the talking of a wild enthusiast who would defeat his own dreams by exaggeration. It was sober, right, feasible thinking. And it worked almost like magic.

A new building was fast becoming a necessity. And it was becoming a necessity principally because of one man's thinking. Peter was doing the leading. He was talking the need of a new building constantly. Privately. Publicly. The audience being large enough to crowd the building on Sunday morning Peter would take advantage of it, and say that pretty soon the congregation would **have** to have larger quarters. And that had a sound effect. The whole congregation began to talk it. They all felt the pressing need. And so the foundation was first laid in their hearts. Later it would be laid in the soil of mother earth.

But Peter was not officious. He did not take into his hands the work that others had to do. This is merely a description of his part. It was nicely interplayed with the work of the others in the congregation.

The elders certainly were not robbed of their duty. Peter absolutely refused to share their duty with them, or to assume it. He placed it firmly upon their shoulders.

The Near East Relief, the Citizens Service Association, the Boy Scouts, the Anti-Saloon League, even

bottling extract companies, ice cream companies, laundries, electric supply companies, Children's Welfare workers, Home Finding Associations, and what-not were trying to get into the church all the time. But a short time could elapse before a representative of some concern would telephone Peter, or telegraph him, or send him a registered letter. He was bombarded with all kinds of absurd requests. Peter came to the conclusion that more folks are trying to work the church than should try. He became very positive on that point. Not that he assumed to make final answer. That's were he placed the responsibility upon the elders. It was their work, their duty, to deal, finally, with all these things. That is, if those presenting them were insistent. But they rarely insisted any further after Peter finished talking with them.

One especially insistent person who went to see Peter in person was Mr. Givens of the Near East Relief. Mr. Givens addressed Peter as "Dr." Finwick. He could make it sound very flattering. But Peter was not staggered by it. He was not cajoled by it. He was quietly civil, but non-committal.

"Well, Dr. Finwick, you say you doubt very gravely that your officers will take a part in our campaign in this city in Near East Relief work. Don't you think you could put it up to them in such a light that they would take part? Don't you think it is a wonderful work? Is it not just such service to humanity as Jesus teaches?" Mr. Givens asked.

Peter ignored the tone of irony in his speech, but he was up and bristling for a reply.

"I believe it is a good work. A most laudable work. But is this work the special obligation of the

churches? Why create an organization and then come and expect to make the church a cat's paw, as the monkey did, to rake the chestnuts out of the fire?

"I might as well tell you frankly, but none the less kindly, Mr. Givens, that the church of which I am a member does not blandly submit to every request that comes along. I have had a dozen, I suppose, of one description and another, within the last few months. We refuse to see ourselves in the light of being dragged into every monetary scheme that men can design. Why not go to the clubs, the Elks, the Kiwanis; to the chain grocery stores; to the department stores, and so on and ask them to let you send a representative to make them a speech for a donation from their members and employes? Why make the churches, that are already burdened to death, the goat? I'll tell you why. It is because there are so many spineless folks in the churches that will let organizations with predatory designs get to them to work their members for all it is worth. It is hardly a question of the good that can be accomplished. It becomes far too mercenary for that. It is a question of how much money can be obtained.

"But again," Peter continued, with Mr. Given's face as red as a beet as he listened helplessly, "The Church of Christ is so constituted, and has such a belief with reference to its organization that it does not yield itself to outside organizations. It stands upon its own authority. We have a body of officers known as elders, or overseers, who take care of all the duties of the church. That is, they decide upon its policies. We hold, of course, that the primary duty of the church is spiritual in nature. We do not go in for socializing the church. We do not undertake to make

it a recreational center. We do not make it a community center. It is a spiritual organization to worship God. And we do not read in the Bible of the church on those days having other functions. We strive to keep the church aloof from the world. It has its work to do. It is independent. And it must be kept so. This is the common view taken by us as a people, and you will find that it is rather more than difficult to make it a monetary source.

"But I would like to say that there is no hard and fast rule for dealing with these matters. Every local congregation is free, through its officers, to act as it may see fit upon such a matter as you bring. And your matter should be presented to the elders. They are the deciding officers in reference to the policies of the church. Moreover, I would like to add, I am not at all disposed to present the matter for you. That is your business. And I positively refuse to attend to it for you. It might be that they would take care of it in a very satisfactory way to you. It is their question. If you want to present it, I'll gladly furnish you with their names, and you can arrange with them to do so. That is as far as I can go."

"It seems to me that your church is very narrow," Mr. Givens ventured to say.

"It may be too narrow to suit your purposes, Mr. Givens," Peter shot back with a punch. It was a staggering blow. "But while it may seem to be too narrow for some purposes, it nevertheless is striving to follow the Bible plan of worship, and to be a church after the apostolic model, and for us that is enough. We ask no more," Peter concluded.

Mr. Givens left a soberer man. And, while it nettled him, he left with more respect for the strength

of the church. He had been used to having them yield into his hands without dispute. And he had no respect for the churches that so yielded, but he did love the filthy lucre (he worked on commission) that the churches so spinelessly supplied.

And so Peter dealt with all cases that affected the authority of the elders of the church. In the final analysis it was always their question. But practically always such things came through him. He was usually the first one approached. And he could speak out with enough emphasis that he simplified the burden of the elders. Peter had learned that some things cannot be dealt with softly. If you put off, and put off, a decision, and keep giving a little with each approach, then finally the matter must be met with less likelihood of a good and clear understanding. So Peter preferred to speak out at first and have done with it.

CHAPTER XXII

Mrs. Corbyn was over at Andover at the close of the school year. She was spending several days with her daughter. She enjoyed being in the big city and shopping at the first class department stores. She enjoyed the good shows, the bright life of the place generally. In fact, she was getting desperate now about changing from Goodnow after all these years. And the more she tasted of the life of the city the more she desired it. Already Mr. Corbyn could foresee that he would likely end by moving to Andover before long.

Mrs. Corbyn was in Andover over Sunday and she went to hear Peter preach. As unbelievable as it was to herself at first, Mrs. Corbyn was coming to accept the thought of Peter as a son-in-law as quite a proper thought. Folks can be such mysteries to themselves to change so completely!

"Your friends are going to be mighty surprised, Eloise, when they hear of your engagement to a preacher who is a member of another church instead of a Methodist. And they would be more surprised if they knew you were a member of the Church of Christ. Think of what this kind of information would do in Goodnow!

"I have been so pained over it that I have not told it. And thank goodness, we do not have Brother Mobley with us now. He, poor man, would be grieved beyond words, if he knew it. He never could stand the people you have identified yourself with. He told me numbers of times that they had the most abominable doctrine," Mrs. Corbyn said to her daughter one morning just before they went down to breakfast.

"Oh, I know all too well what Brother Mobley thought, Mother. But he was always afraid that the Church of Christ would get some of his members. I think all the denominations feel this way about the matter. They know that the Church of Christ holds an incontrovertible position upon the Scriptures. And they are also conscious that they, the denominations, hold equally controvertible doctrines. And this makes the denominations say all kinds of untrue and unkind things against an innocent and unoffending people. They seek to keep their members from hearing preachers of the Church of Christ, who are the best prepared preachers, so far as the Scriptures are concerned, of any class of preachers, just because they are afraid for their members to hear the plain gospel. And the most effective way they have ever devised to keep their members away from hearing preachers of the Church of Christ is to say that they preach all kinds of abominable doctrines that they do not preach. Why, I had prejudices against them myself, before I had ever heard them—and met Peter. Now I know that the Methodist preachers who had made all kinds of charges against them in my presence all my life just did not know, or else they were down right mean in telling malicious falsehoods against folks whom they should have respected.

"And, Mother dear, I am afraid that you are prejudiced against the Church of Christ yet. I think you are getting over a lot of it. But it is not right to be prejudiced against anybody, Mother. We should have more tolerance. Especially is that true of members of the denominations who always say that one can be saved in one church ss well as in another. If they believe what they say, then why are they so embittered against the Church of Christ as they often are?"

"Well, I may have prejudices in my system, Eloise, but you yourself know that it is more popular to be a Methodist than it is to be a member of the Church of Christ, and —"

But Eloise caught her up right at that point.

"Yes, and it was more popular to be a pagan in the Roman Empire at first than it was to be a Christian. It was said that this sect was everthwere spoken against. It was the despised sect of the Nazarene. The popular side is so apt to be wrong. And one should care more for the truth and right than for the popular side. I am amazed at your frankness in saying that you care for the popular side, Mother. I do believe that this has always kept you from seeing what truth you might have seen."

Mrs. Corbyn was getting angry.

"You didn't let me finish, Eloise. I don't care for the popular side regardless of anything. I started to add that all our friends and associates and training had been on the side of the popular element in Goodnow. These things are not as lightly cast aside as you seem to think in your complete infatuation for this preacher in the Church of Christ. This younger generation does not seem able to appreciate what it means to hold to the old elements in life that have made them and given them a chance—made them all they are, in fact. Spoiled children who do not know what struggles their parents have gone through to give them a finer and better chance in life than the parents had. Of course you cannot know. And then you would turn on your mother and tell her that she is prejudiced, and a popularity seeker."

"Now, Mother, you are getting me all wrong. And you are seeking to turn the argument from the

point that we were on. You have turned it to charge me with ingratitude and lack of appreciation. And that is not the point at all. I said that we should not care so much what people think as long as we are in the right. Prejudice ought not to exist. You know that we were talking about what the people in Goodnow would think if they knew.

"Well, we had just as well face the facts. They'll have to know pretty soon now."

"Eloise, I had hoped, to the last minute, that you would find this to be only an infatuation, and that you would return to us just what you were when you left. I had hoped that you would break off this engagement and go on with your same old group of friends in Goodnow. I told your father just before I left home that I was going to plead with you to do this. And he said that he hoped you would.

"Do you know what it means, child, to do your father and me this way? We'll be shamed before all our friends in Goodnow. You'll be a member of one church and we'll be members of another.

"And now, I am going to ask you, for our sake, that you will go on just the same in Goodnow when we go home. And go with us to the Methodist church where you always went. You can do this for us, surely. And we'll not tell any one of your change in religion. We'll just let that pass. And then if you spend some time away from Mr. Finwick, and come to find that after all you had better go on and select some other young man instead, no one need ever be the wiser in Goodnow," Mrs. Corbyn said.

She had taken out a handkerchief during her remarks and now she began to daub at her eyes. And she was really crying. This was no light matter with her. She was hurt. She had resolved upon this

course, and this last appeal, before she left home.

"If next Fall, after a Summer away from him, you care less, then you will know that mother was wise. But if you still care in the same way, and it means your happiness, then your father and I are going to be reasonable. We have decided upon that course. No matter how it hurts, we will not get in the way of your happiness," she said.

"Mother, you are generous and sweet. And I do love you, Oh, so much. And dear old dad. I know that he told you to let me understand it would be my happiness first. That is just like him. He is so unselfish.

"But Mother, I don't think you understand. I'll consent to spend the Summer away from Peter—that is, that portion of it that he is due to be away—but I cannot afford to be absent from the Church of Christ in any place where I may be. If I spend the Summer in Goodnow I'll have to go to the Church of Christ at the eleven o'clock service on Sundays. They have the Lord's Supper there every Sunday, and I feel that it is my duty to go there for it and for the other things they do. The Methodists do not have the Lord's Supper every Sunday and I cannot go there for that reason on Sunday mornings. But I'll be just as generous as I can. I'll go with you to all other services at the Methodist Church. But I cannot do otherwise. My conscience will not let me!"

"It's going to be terrible, dear, terrible!" Mrs. Corbyn said as she began to cry violently. It was dawning upon her that the Corbyn family in Goodnow was going to be divided. And how that would prick Mrs. Corbyn's vanity and pride! And she saw no way out of it.

But breakfast was ready. A bell was rung in the

big house. The conversation, painful as it was, had to stop.

"Here, Mother dear," Eloise said, as she came over and wiped her mother's face with her own handkerchief. "Now, let me put some powder on your face. I don't want the girls to know that you have been crying."

She went to the vanity dresser, secured powder puff and a slight bit of rouge and fixed her mother all up.

Mrs. Corbyn began to wonder if she could not keep her daughter away from Goodnow the most of the Summer. She wanted to travel anyway, and she began to turn the subject of travel over in her mind. And then she began to think more seriously about moving to Andover in the Fall, if she could persuade her husband to do so. And that would relieve the situation. Then her daughter could go to church—away from the old group in Goodnow who might think and say a lot if they knew just what was going on. The more she thought about leaving Goodnow, under the influence of this new circumstance, the more the thought appealed to her. Then she would not have to face the ordeal of a divided house, and the obloquy that would attach to her daughter's being a member of the Church of Christ. In Goodnow that would be far harder to bear than it would in Andover. She knew that full well.

CHAPTER XXIII

Eloise felt that her mother was taking her away to the mountains in Upper Maryland for the Summer for the purpose of keeping her from attending Peter's meeting in Goodnow. And she knew, for her mother was honest enough to tell her, that she wanted her to be away from Peter for the Summer to try to see if she would feel less keenly for Peter. She agreed with her mother to make that effort just to please her. Then, too, it would be quite nice to spend the hot weather in the mountains. While she had not so spent a Summer before, Eloise realized quite clearly that the intense summer heat in Alabama was suffocating.

She wanted to tell Peter why she was spending the Summer away from him, but she feared that she would wound him. And she was afraid also that he would not understand.

But Eloise believed before half of the Summer was gone that the old statement, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," was true. At least under these circumstances it was true. Under other circumstances perhaps it would not be true.

Mrs. Corbyn was also glad to get away from the quite trying circumstance of having a divided family in Goodnow for the Summer. She came to feel that she simply could not stand the humiliation of seeing her daughter trek off to the Church of Christ in Goodnow—after all these years. No, what she and hers had stood for in Goodnow was too pronounced in everybody's mind for that sort of thing to happen, if it could be prevented under any guise whatsoever. And what more pleasant and dignified than to cover

the whole thing by this trip off to the mountains for the Summer? And Eloise was not even allowed to go home for but two week days before the trip began. Thank goodness, Mrs. Corbyn had saved her reputation for the nonce. Later events—well, they could take care of themselves.

Mrs. Corbyn felt that a great deal could happen before Eloise could again spend any considerable time in Goodnow.

It grieved Peter no little to be left without a chance of seeing Eloise when he should visit Goodnow for his meeting. But he would have to pass that, for Eloise wrote him that she was having a good time roaming over the tree-covered, vine-clad, flower-bedecked mountains. And the cool air. How one could sleep at night. Really, she slept under cover every night. And there was the most beautiful scenery. But she did admit that she got a bit bored with the quiet of the place. She was beginning to yearn for the city again. No shows, no clanger. But she and her mother were motoring over to a small town by the name of Frosberg where she had understood there was a good picture show. There was a delightful young lady friend who was spending the Summer at the same great mountain hotel. They would take her and go on the very next day. That would be a change.

And so Eloise rambled on in her letter. And she wrote something every day. It was the outstanding happening of each. She looked forward to getting Peter's letter, and then to the pleasant task of writing him in return.

The first meeting Peter held for the Summer was over in a little Arkansas town. Conditions were favorable and he had a good ingathering. He preached the most effective line of sermons of his life. And he

was also in training for his special series which should follow in Goodnow. He meant to do his best. In fact, that was one thing he always did. He felt the responsibility of doing his best whenever he went into the pulpit. Of course, he felt more poignantly at times. Sometimes he felt a little more inclined toward the ludicrous. Again he felt more natural, and more like talking direct to the folks, more in a conversational manner of address. He could not feel the same always on entering the pulpit. And he was well aware of this difference. But despite this temperamental make up, to which all preachers are subject in a measure, he did feel the weight of the responsibility resting upon him whenever he addressed dying humanity. His view of the nature of man, and men's prospects for another life in the hereafter, flavored his address at all times. The weight of the theme tempered his speech.

But the human element in preaching, which no one escapes, he felt, and so he prepared with a view to his line of discourses in Goodnow. He realized that he should not get to preach to Eloise, but he wanted to reach all his friends, and those whom he had known outside of the church while he had lived in Goodnow.

There was nothing sensational in Peter's line of sermons in Goodnow. He was not the sort of fellow who sought to interest by claptrap methods. He had too exalted an opinion of the ministry for that. His appeal, in sermon subject, and in style of delivery as well, was studious, directed toward the better elements in the human heart. A clear, dignified, honest, manly plan of preaching was his objective and his ideal. But personality and method cannot be separated. The cultured gentleman is no where more in evidence than in the pulpit. And the creature who is off balance no where more plainly shows that than

when his tongue is loosed before an audience. "The fool is known by his multitude of words." And he is also known in them as well. In the pulpit by choice of diction, by chaste selection of imagery, the gentleman is inevitably stamped. The lower type of mind, by less delicacy in selection of imagery and language, will repell. Sometimes the man who never went to college, but whose innate sense of the fitness of things, will put him in the gentleman's class, while the better trained person offends the tender moral sensibilities of the more refined folk. Why is this? Because some men have more talents than others. Preaching is no elementary art. It can profit the most, the same as any line, by the use of the highest order of personalities.

Peter had that balance that caused him rarely to offend, and then never in the deeper sense. It was a gift. All such preaching is a gift—whatever the acquired capabilities may be.

The power of personality must be put alongside the power of the gospel of God. But this will not injure the power of the gospel of God. It will enhance it.

The second day that he was in town Peter went to call on Mr. Corbyn. They had a very long and pleasant conversation. Mr. Corbyn denied himself to everybody as long as Peter remained. He insisted that Peter would come up to the house and spend a night or two with him.

"I am taking my meals across the street with Mrs. Swindle while my wife and Eloise are away, but I sleep at home, and would like to have you come up and visit with me," Mr. Corbyn said.

"Thank you, very much," Peter said. "I have a room down at the hotel. But I occupy it a very little.

The whole membership seem intent on having me visit them while I am here. I do usually go to the hotel for the night and for breakfast. But the other two meals I eat elsewhere. Maybe I shall be able to visit with you while I am here."

"How long will the meeting continue?" Mr. Corbyn asked.

"Ten days," Peter said.

"And you began last night?"

"Yes."

"Come to church," Peter urged when he left.

"Yes, I'll be there tonight. I would have come last night, but a business engagement kept me away."

And he did as he said. Peter saw Mr. Corbyn in the audience that night and at every other night service until the meeting closed.

Peter had a definite outline of sermons for this meeting. The first one was on "How To Study the Bible." Each sermon thereafter continued in a line of Scripture exposition that completely dovetailed into each sermon preceding and into each one following. The sermons were one line of argument on the Bible plan of salvation. The "Great Commission," "The Establishment of the Church," "The Conditions of Church Membership," "Church Membership and Salvation—Their Relation," and divers other subjects were discussed. The series was a very strong one.

Next to the last night Peter received the surprise of his life when Mr. Corbyn started down the aisle as the invitation was extended. He did not look for Goodnow's leading citizen, although some of the leading members of the Church of Christ did. They had been watching the interest manifested by Mr.

Corbyn. They could see that he was profoundly interested.

The thing that convinced Mr. Corbyn of the need of a change in his position religiously was the fact that he saw from this group of evangelistic sermons for the first time in his life a consistency in the Bible plan of salvation. The Bible had always been more or less of a hazy idea, blurred and indistinct, before his mind, until this time. And he became clearly convinced that he needed to obey the gospel as set forth in the great commission. And he saw how this commission had been unfolded in practice by the apostles as recorded in Acts of Apostles. The whole thing became movingly clear. Out of the haze there came light. Out of chaos order.

Mr. Corbyn had ability to say pretty well, either publicly or privately, what he felt. His long experience in the Methodist Church had given him confidence when he appeared before the public. And since he was making such a radical change in his religious connections, he asked Peter for the opportunity to set forth the reason for his change.

"My friends," Mr. Corbyn said, addressing the audience, "I have been following this series of sermons very closely. I have tried to get into the merits of the Bible plan of salvation. And I can truthfully say to you that now, for the first time in my life, I see light. I see wherein I have been wrong. I hear about, and then take my Bible and read, the passages that teach us about the church. That church is the Church of Christ, or the Church of God. I find the names of no other church is this Book (raising the book up in his right hand before the people). I want to be a member of the church you can read about in this Book. I can read in this Book, as our young friend has been preaching, what people did to be-

come Christians. Turn to Acts and read with me the case of the euneuch. Read the case of the Phillipian jailer. I want to do what those men did. I want to acknowledge my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ before men and then, upon a genuine repentance, to be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of sins. I want to be baptized like those men were. They went down into the water. Then they were baptized. And they came up straightway out of the water. I know now that I was not led in this way. When I was an infant some water was sprinkled on me, I have been told. Now I want to obey my Lord intelligently. And I feel that I must. I know now that I did not understand. I have walked in darkness. Now before God and you good people, who have always been my friends, I must obey the Lord, and the Lord only. I wanted you to understand. When I knew no better the former position was alright. But after tonight it could do no longer. My conscience would not let me fail of my duty after I have learned it. And I would like to exhort all my friends, to whom the Bible is a dark book, and who have not undertaken to learn just what it says for them to do to be saved, to try to learn their duty, which is so plain to me now, and to be saved upon the terms of the gospel.

"Friends, one day each individual soul must stand before God and give an answer. To his Lord each servant must stand or fall. Therefore, disregard as far as is possible what friends and loved ones will think, and try to see what the Lord will think, and what he will demand, and then obey him, forgetting all that men may do unto you. That is what I am doing tonight.

"Let me say farther that in taking this step, I am no man's enemy. I am more the friend of everybody

in this town, who wants to stand for the right. If you cannot see things as I do, I shall be charitable toward you. And I request the same. But my supreme request will be that each soul try for himself to learn what the Lord wants, and demands of every soul, and then try to do it, as I am this night."

What effect upon Goodnow! What talk! Folks were made to sit up and take notice. Peter also baptized a host of other people, several being prominent citizens. This meeting stirred Goodnow to its very center.

Mr. Corbyn telegraphed Mrs. Corbyn and Eloise on the day of his baptism.

The message was relayed from the nearest telegraph station by telephone to the mountain hotel. Mrs. Corbyn received the message. When the telegraph operator told her what was in the message she got so weak in her knees that she could hardly stand. Again her world was crashing about her ears.

When she went back to her room Eloise was sitting near a window reading a late book of fiction. She looked up at her mother, and saw that she was deathly pale. Also she saw that her mother was going direct for the bed. She got to it and fell across it. Eloise went to her mother.

"What is the matter, Mother? Has something dreadful happened to Daddy?"

"No. Nothing affecting his health. He is alright, I suppose. Just a sudden bit of news from him. And it upset me—it was so unexpected. He wired me that he was baptized by Peter Finwick at three o'clock this afternoon. That was an hour ago."

"Oh, dear old Dad!" Eloise gurgled. And then she rushed back to her chair and covered her face in her hands and cried for joy. She left Mrs. Corbyn to her own devices.

CHAPTER XXIV

Alan B. Whiteman did not like Peter Finwick. He did not like him from the start. He did not like his manner in the pulpit, his style of delivery. He did not like the way Peter dressed. He did not like the cut of his clothes, or the cut of his hair. He did not like anything about him.

And yet Alan B. Whiteman was strangely friendly with Peter Finwick! That he did not like the Pinehurst Street preacher he did not show. He kept that pretty well covered. I say pretty well covered. Not entirely. But he did reveal to his henchmen that he did not like Peter. He himself was too diplomatic for that sort of a thing.

Very often Peter was invited down town for luncheon with Brother Alan B. Whiteman. Brother Whiteman was a bookkeeper for Loeb and Loeb and J. Loeb Sons' Company, two separate concerns that belonged in the same family. These two concerns were separated by a store that operated under the name of May Brothers, but they were Jews and their name had originally been an unpronounceable something. So the good English name of May was chosen. May Brothers was a haberdashery. Loeb and Loeb and J. Loeb Sons' Company were both ladies' ready-to-wear stores. When Brother Whiteman was not to be found at one of the stores he was at the other. He was head bookkeeper. He was good in his line. And the two companies, being in the same family, sought to economize by using Brother Whiteman as the head bookkeeper and then employing a couple of undependable girls. They made

Alan B. Whiteman's work rather difficult. But he carried it.

His position, being bound to go from one store to the other, made Brother Whiteman more or less his own boss. He was entirely dependable and Loeb and Loeb and J. Loeb Sons' Company both knew it. He went to them from a Jewish concern in another city. He had been recommended to them before moving.

Alan B. Whiteman had a brother who was a preacher. In fact he had two brothers who were preachers. He himself was a singer. He was active in church work, and had been ever since he was a lad. His father was active before him. And he had been well trained.

Brother Whiteman assumed he knew a lot about preachers and preaching. He had learned this from his brother preachers and from other preachers whom he had known. He had engaged in singing for preachers in summer meetings for several seasons before he was married and settled down to the serious business of making a living.

Besides all which, Brother Alan B. Whiteman had a bossy, dictatorial disposition. He just had to be busy, and to be busy in some important light in church work. And the plain truth is that he had ability to do things. But nature had played a strange quirk on him. He was not a level-headed fellow. The ability which had been given him to go ahead had not been tempered with the fine power of discretion that must accompany such leadership for one to be sucessful. Brother Whiteman had the unfortunate experience of making mistakes that brought him into some disrepute.

There are many timid men, endowed not at all with the determination and the will "to speak out in

meeting," whose judgment is very splendid. Then there is Brother Alan B. Whiteman's type. In each case it is like hitching up the ass with the ox. When one has both the judgment and the will, and the determination to be heard, genuine leadership will be found.

But there are numbers of people who blandly submit, and run the erands of another who is bold enough to speak out. 'Tis strange, this world of humanity! Every bossy boy among boys will be the natural leader. He can make the others do whatever he says. Brother Whiteman was a big boy among boys. He simply spoke up. And he soon had a number of puppets in the Pinehurst Street Church who said and did what he wished.

A tall, upstanding, blond fellow, a voluble talker, a commander, an enthusiast, Alan B. Whiteman had a way of cornering certain fellows who had small will power and were not gifted to think for themselves, and he talked with them in all confidence. How their little hearts did swell! Ze grand fellow almost condescended to impart some inside information!

But Brother Whiteman was a superficial thinker. He did not think things through.

Brother Whiteman had arrived in Andover about six months after Peter put in his appearance. He decided that Pinehurst was the place for him to worship. He lived in this vicinity. And hence he began to attend there. He had not been there many months before he was leading the singing a lot. Coming more and more to the front, he began to get in the public eye.

Brother Whiteman was in for repairing and en-

larging the Pinehurst Street meeting house, but Peter never favored it. And at a luncheon down town one day to which Peter was especially invited, this question came up just between the two, and Peter, being more mentally agile, convinced Brother Whiteman that a new building entirely was what they needed. Thereafter Brother Whiteman became one of the most pronounced boosters for it. He took advantage of the occasion the next Sunday and said, when he observed the crowded condition of the place of worship, that a new building was inevitable. And he sold the idea to a large number of people.

There was a man in the Pinehurst Street Church who was very strong for Brother Whiteman. This man was older than Brother Whiteman by some years. Seemingly he was very religious. His name was L. L. Bradshaw.

Brother Bradshaw had an unsavory reputation for paying his bills. 'Twas said that he was not as conscientious about paying them as his protestations of undying devotion to the Lord and his church would have indicated that he should have been. But of course this was not extensively advertised.

Also Brother Bradshaw, while grayheaded, and the father of a whole house full of children, had not a single child in the church. His wife was a member of the Baptist church, and while he had always seemed very religious, he had not been able to make an impression upon Mrs. Bradshaw. She remained a Baptist.

A member of the Pinehurst Street Church, chagrined at Brother Bradshaw about some little matter, accused him of hypocrisy to several of the members. She said that his hypocrisy was to blame for his failure with his wife and his children. However that was, this scribe does not profess to know. But it

was strange. How could so very religious a man have such little influence upon his bosom companion and upon the children of his loins? Did that wife and those children know that he was not so devoted as he seemed? That remained a mystery.

Brother Bradshaw travelled for a barber supply house in Andover. Over the country quite a bit he had large contacts with the churches and preachers in his territory.

One point that Brother Bradshaw was proud of, perhaps excessively proud of, was the chastising that he had given to so many preachers. He was always correcting some preacher, to hear him tell it. He was great to correct preachers, to give them a lot of gratuitious advise, to direct them. He was forever busy in picking out the motes in their manner of preaching, or in their policies. He was a regular preacher "killer." No one of them could please him for long. It probably never occurred to Brother Bradshaw that he elected himself to this office as special mentor for preachers in the Church of Christ. He assuredly did not think himself officious. And if he had been as roundly advised in regard to paying his debts and rearing his children in the faith, he should no doubt have been highly insulted. "The legs of the lame are unequal."

Brother Bradshaw even came to the point of writing articles to the religious press criticising certain things about the preachers of the church *en masse*. His hobby about preachers, or his hobby about his hobby of correcting preachers was the women troubles that he had heard reported against some of them.

As has been before stated, no preacher could long survive criticism when he faced the cruel battery of Brother Bradshaw's eyes. Poor Peter was in for it.

And the truth to tell, until Brother Bradshaw got to talking the matter to Brother Alan B. Whiteman, Peter's clothes did not look so bad. His speech was not so objectionable. His manner was not so disconcerting. But after Brother Bradshaw had talked with him a few times, Brother Whiteman began to lose respect for Peter. In fact, that was what Brother Bradshaw did to a lot of folks. He caused them to lose respect for preachers of the gospel. But that was not all he did. He caused a lot of folks to lose respect for him.

One day in the summer season while Peter was away from Andover in revivals Brother Bradshaw, being in town, dropped down for a talk with Brother Whiteman. This casual conversation of the "preacher killer" and the "busy-body" was the match to the powder. It was the ignition, the starting of the flame.

Peter had to face no end of trouble because these two got together. It never occurred to them though, that they were making trouble for a righteous man, for a servant of God. They really felt that some things would be better otherwise. And so felt Korah and his confederates when they withstood Moses in the wilderness.

The church is a freer moving ground for characters of this type than any other that this scribe knows about. Its peace is so often desecrated by deluded, if well meaning folk who assume to be heard when it would be better for their tongues to be removed.

"I'll tell you, Brother Bradshaw, when we get this new house that we are talking about building, we'll change preachers," Brother Whiteman said to Brother Bradshaw.

"Well, I think we ought to. I don't think this man suits this place," Brother Bradshaw said. "We

need another preacher, one with a broader experience and a bigger reputation."

"I quite agree. And while he is my brother, and I could not push him for that very reason, I believe that George G. would make a fine man for this work," Brother Whiteman said.

"Yes, he would. And since you can't push him, I can. And I will. When we get rid of Finwick, I'll bring up George G.'s name," Brother Bradshaw said.

"But we mustn't breathe this to a soul," Brother Whiteman said.

"You mustn't, but I can," Brother Bradshaw said. "But my advise is that we do not connect the two things. First get rid of Finwick. And then at the right time we'll bring in George G.'s name.

"I'll see how many seem to think a change will be desirable," Brother Bradshaw concluded.

While Peter was away this thing worked along rapidly. And when he returned in the Fall he faced a difficult situation. It would not have gone so far if he had been present all the Summer.

When Silas Jenkins heard this rumor of discharging Peter, or just letting his contract run out without renewing it, it made him mad all over. He saw through the nefarious scheme at once.

He saw that some human vultures were intent upon destroying the reputation and usefulness of a good man because they just could not keep themselves out of the other fellow's business.

But in the absence of a Silas Jenkins things would have been vastly different. No doubt they would have "got" Peter.

Silas Jenkins had a stronger personality than did Alan B. Whiteman. And he had better judgment.

Peter was preparing to get married, and he was a very happy man. But just at this time, back from his summer meetings, the information began to trickle through to him that dissatisfaction with him was in certain folks. Why could not a person be altogether happy in this world? Certainly a man should be when he was going to marry the most wonderful girl in the world. Why did this fly in his ointment choose this time to swim around before his eyes?

When Peter began to find out who were his enemies and who were his friends, he worked as he had never worked to overcome this factional spirit that was springing up against him. He felt that it was utterly causeless, as it was. And so he visited the whole membership again. He noticed cold receptions with certain folks though. This thing had gone a long way in about six weeks' time.

"I'll tell you, Brother Finwick, what you do. You sit right steady in the boat. Don't talk this thing, now that you know it. I think I know the source of it. But the best way to deal with it is to ignore it for a while. They can do nothing. We had already agreed to retain you for the second year before you left for your summer meetings. You are engaged now until next Fall. Nearly a whole year is before you. Many things can happen in a year.

"And the factional spirit can be controlled. They don't mean to think of a change until you help to get the new house. They expect that to be built this year. Then they plan to get in another man. And now while I don't like to boast, and don't mean to, I will likely have more to say than anybody about financing the new building. And I am going to have a meeting with the officers of this church, both elders

and deacons, and I am going to refuse to use my name or my credit, if it comes to that point, to put up this new building unless they will extend you a five-year contact. I will say to them that I know the weakness of folks and that they sometimes want to change preachers when they get new buildings. And I am going to tell them that to be fair with you after doing so much as you have done and are doing with this church that you ought to be given a chance to prove your ability on a larger scale with new quarters. And I'll say a lot more than this to the officers of this church one at a time. It will go over too.

"And then where will the disturbers be? They will simply be left out in the cold. They can do nothing. So don't you pay any attention to them. Just go along and do your work. And preach stronger sermons than ever. Show a higher spirit of happiness," Silas Jenkins advised.

CHAPTER XXV

"Mother and Daddy are really moving to Andover this fall," Eloise said to Peter one day after they had both returned to the city. Eloise was in school again and Peter was busy in the work of the church. At first they had determined to marry that very fall, but they had postponed the wedding for a short time, anyway. No date was set. But Peter meant for the wedding to take place before the year was up, if he should have his way.

"I am glad to hear they are moving over," Peter said in answer to her statement. "And I know you will be much happier."

"Yes. I shall be so happy. Then I'll have all my loved ones—that is, the three in whom I am deeply interested, gathered right about me.

"Mother is bored to distraction with Goodnow these days. And Daddy is tired of it too. He found that his religious change did make a difference with a lot of the folk at Goodnow. He could hardly believe it, in fact, can hardly believe it yet, but the folks there have convinced him that it does make a difference what one believes. Old Doctor Hardison, who has always been a close friend to the family, now treats Dad coldly. It's just in the air. You can feel it. Daddy appears not to notice it, but he acknowledges that he sees a change in some of his one-time friends. And he is tired of Goodnow, anyway. I really believe though that this very thing has had a lot to do with his decision to move over here. He has fully made up his mind now, so Mother wrote me. And she thinks this had something to do with his decision too."

" 'Yea, and all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution'," Peter quoted. "There are many in the world like Sanballet and Tobiah, who hindered the building of the walls of the city of Jerusalem. Many would hinder the spread of the pure gospel of Christ now. They hate the simple truth with a fierce hate. But the Lord's people have always been hated. And they have been hated worse by the prophets of Baal and other religious folk than by the irreligious elements of humanity. Differences in religion have always been bitter differences.

"Christ came into open conflict with the leading Jewish teachers of his day, and those teachers, driven by dark passions, condemned him to die. It is because it is a war unto death between the pure doctrine of Christ and the doctrines of men. That is what the fight is always about. There'll be no reconciliation between these forces until the end of time. The battle is on. And I personally do not seek to deny so patent a truth. I know that the Church of Christ is not now, and never will be, in harmony with the denominational churches about. It is as different from them as day is from night. If denominational leaders are confused over the point, and only know that they hate the plain disciples of Christ who will be members of no other church except the Church of Christ, and do not know why, I am not deceived. It is the old conflict between Christ and Satan.

"But I am genuinely sorry for your father's sake. 'But the disciple is not above his Lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?' But set in contrast, these things make the hope of the Christian all the sweeter. And they ground him in his religion. The forces of antagonism are as invaluable as those of protagonism," Peter said.

"I'll just get a good chance and console Daddy with such thoughts," Eloise said. "Where is the quotation found that you have just used?" she asked.

"Matthew 10:25. But your father will be strengthened by the principle just alluded to even if he never hears the quotation," Peter said. "Southey said that the strongest trees in all England were those on the coast of the North Sea, where the mighty winds the most fiercely assailed them. We sometimes grow under adversity. And your father will be stronger, no doubt, if he is made conscious of a religious discrimination. But I am sorry for him. We dislike to see anyone suffer such things. They scar the heart."

"Yes," she agreed. "I would not misrepresent the whole town of Goodnow though, Peter. There were many upon whom Daddy's change in religion made no perceptible impression for coldness, or positive disapproval."

"You are right no doubt. There are many in every community who do not care what happens to their neighbors. The irreligious and indifferent element would think nothing about it. They would, if they did think, think of the prejudice of those who showed any inconsideration."

"I know that Mother must be suffering terribly over this thing, for she is sensitive as she can be. Daddy would only shrug his shoulders and let it pass. And that makes me think of a poem I love. It runs this way:

"'Time at last makes all things straight,
Be not swift to take offense;
Let it pass!
Anger is a foe to sense:
Let it pass!
Brood not darkly over a wrong

Which will disappear ere long:
Rather sing this cherry song:
Let it pass! Let it pass!
" 'Strife corrodes the purest mind;
Let it pass!
As the unregarded wind,
Let it pass!
Any heartless souls that live
May condemn without reprieve—
'Tis the noble who forgive:
Let it pass! Let it pass'!"

"Very sweet and true," Peter said. "But about your mother. Do you think she will hold out long against the truth?"

"That is hard to tell. She is more reasonable all the time. She used to have a very little use for you, you no doubt know."

"I suspected that she thought considerably less of me than you did," he commented.

"I shall never forget the first time you came to see me. Mother was all cut up about it. She let me know it too. But I just played her along. And wasn't she surprised when I told her not long ago that I knew your mother, brother and one of your sisters? She wanted to know when I had met them. And I told her. She did not like it because I had not told her before. But it was her unsympathetic attitude toward you that kept me from talking with her about meeting them. I had always unbosomed myself in everything to her all my life. But this matter of loving you would have suffered infinitely if I had shared it with any one. Added to that take Mother's displeasure and naturally I would not tell her anything about it."

Peter rewarded her for such expressions as only a

lover can. It meant—But why tell that. The reader will have to supply that part.

"We are drifting from the subject again," Peter said. "And yet why stick to it since it is only conjecture as to what your mother will do? You have known her all your life however, and therefore you are in a position to say what you think her reactions will be to certain things. You were altogether correct as to the reactions of your parents toward your announcement to them of our engagement. They acted just as you said they would, as you have told me many times. Well, that leads me to believe that you have figured out pretty well what your mother's mental turns are."

"Yes, I can guess pretty well what she will do under certain circumstances. And I can imagine her chagrin at being tied to Goodnow at this time with things standing as they are. She must be awfully disturbed. And I do believe that for Mother's eternal good it would be better for Daddy to move her over here. Then she would be cut off from her old friends. And she could act more independently. She has always cared a great deal what others thought. Daddy has always had an ear to the ground, so to speak, but he has never allowed that to lead him away from principles. He has always had the power to say no and to stand firm when a test has come. He has been nicely considerate of public opinion, as every public, and successful man must be. Mother has always been more socially inclined. She cares more for that than I do. And that makes me wonder just what kind of a preacher's wife I shall make."

"The best in the world," he said.

"You would flatter me on that score," she replied.

"No."

"Yes you do. But I shall do the very best I can,

and with you to help me, I am going to do my best to succeed.

"What do you consider the leading characteristic of a successful preacher's wife?" she asked, as anxious to learn his opinion as anything else.

"Seeing that I have never had experience with wives of my own, I suspect I should not try to answer that," he said.

"Give me your opinion," she urged.

"It occurs to me that a preacher's wife can no more succeed in her work than a preacher can in his without, first, a genuine love for God, and secondly, an equally genuine love for poor, weak humanity. A snob is bad anywhere. But a snob in the pulpit or a snob in the preacher's home as his wife is about the worst thing that can be. I would say therefore that a preacher's wife must be big of heart, and free from a desire to make her social life first. She must love the whole membership, the poor and unfortunate as well as the high and mighty."

"I think you are right," Eloise agreed.

"I know a preacher's wife who is just what I think a preacher's wife ought not to be. She is Brother Judson's wife. She will visit the rich members of the congregation with pleasure. And she shows this thing plainly to all the members. Consequently, she has deeply injured her husband's influence for good."

"That's pitiful," Eloise said.

"Tragic and unchristian," Peter added.

"With a good and wise preacher for a husband I am sure that I shall succeed better than that," she said. "And if you see me failing, then tell me so, and I'll try to correct my mistakes."

"I shall need your counsels and courage at times," Peter said. "And we must never let any offenses, whether intended or unintended, get under our hides

so that we shall become bitter and fight back. That warps the vision and the heart. And we must keep our hearts and our minds clear, and our eyes undimmed in the Lord's work. But I am confident from what little experience that I have had that we shall have trouble enough doing that.

"It is strange too that one should even think so. We are in a peaceful calling, and we are called unto peace, but taking care of the spiritual interests of the Lord's people is a greater task than the most folks think. I imagine that there are a good many people who think a preacher's life is not very busy. They just cannot grasp the scope of his work. Sometimes now my brain nearly reels with the things I have to think of, and as this church grows stronger, the burden increases. We'll just have to find ways of getting others to do more things so that we can have our powers released for what must be done."

"I know so little about being a preacher's wife, Peter. I am afraid that I shall be an awful handicap to you."

"No. If you knew less, or had less breadth of vision, you might talk that way. But I believe you will make the best preacher's wife of them all. Ah, but I'll be proud of you! And everybody will know it. I am sure I show it now."

"No prouder than I am of you. You can't be as proud," she said.

CHAPTER XXVI

Now that Eloise had obeyed the gospel and was one of the members of the Pinehurst Street Church there was no longer any discussion of her from an evil standpoint. She had become the accepted fiancee of the young minister of the church. Folk fell into taking that all for granted. But the good, staid members of the church were nevertheless anxious for the marriage to take place. They did not want the obtruding of this courtship upon the public attention. And it mattered not how delicately it was conducted, there was more or less publicity given it because of the public character of Peter's work. But wasn't that true of all that pertained to his work, as well as of any other preacher?

Peter no longer hesitated as he had about going about to public places with his fiancee. He and Eloise went to services at Hanford Street Church one night to hear Houghton Westerfell preach. He was an evangelist of renown. But he was altogether a different type from Wilkes Barton, who by the way was engaged for a meeting at the Pinehurst Street Church for a Spring meeting the second year of Peter's ministery in Andover, was a sauve, smooth gentleman. He was no more the gentleman than Houghton Westerfell, but he was a different man through and through. The preaching of Wilkes Barton was simplicity itself. The preaching of his contemporary and equally illustrous fellow-evangelist was, in marked contrast, deeply intellectual, and more or less (mostly more) polemic in nature. Brother Westerfell was leonine, savage in his attacks upon error, whether the error was held by the denominational world, or by the

brethren. He excoriated the brethren whenever he felt like it. And while he was hardly conscious of it, sometimes the gastronomic condition of his stomach had something to do with the violence of his attack upon error. Yet he was undeniably a great man, and had a great mind. His preaching was technical, logical, didactic, but it was done with scarcely any emotion at all. He did not, accordingly, obtain the visible results in the numbers of additions that his contemporary did. But he was in strong demand throughout the nation.

There was a prevalent condition at Hanford Street Church that needed attention. It was another case of "preacher-itis," after it had seemed that Brother Avery Sutton did dominate the situation, and that such a thing could never arise, but nevertheless it had come up, after many years.

A clique had lined up against Brother Avery Sutton. Some of the deacons were in it. The thing was in a dangerous way. Houghton Westerfell knew about the whole thing, but he did not touch it except in the pulpit. He did lay down a heavy barrage against scism in the membership. But while he was able to retard, and to hold in temporary abeyance, the spirit of rebellion that was flaring up against Brother Sutton, when the meeting closed it broke out with more violence than ever, and that for the added reason that all the rebels came to the conclusion that Brother Westerfell had been induced to preach as he had by Brother Sutton. So the preaching out of such circumstances recoiled upon itself. Funny (with much latitude in the use of the word) how preaching is affected by circumstances, and that a preacher's message must be nicely timed and balanced.

Houghton Westerfell laid no claims to being a dip-

lomat in any sense of the word. In fact, it is very doubtful whether he was diplomatic. He was forceful, and he overrode many situations in life that did not seem to be for his interest. By sheer dominance of a virile personality he put himself across in practically every fight. But he lacked that nicer perception of the heart of another, and that unselfish care for the opinions of another that precluded the possibility of his being a diplomat. What he could not obtain by a bold stroke he could never obtain. He lacked the steady consciousness of a will that could bend but never break, and that could work toward an objective for many months against great odds and never lose hope. And this explains why he found such a situation as he did at Hanford Street Church and then, hastily cutting at it, left it to grow worse. He probably thought he had cut the heart of opposition out.

It was none of Peter's business. And yet he was not a busy-body. There is a great difference between a person who puts himself out to help the Lord's cause and the person who talks about the misfortunes of that cause with a sting of malice in the heart. The reason must be kept clear with love for the overshadowing interest of the Master in order for one to enter any kind of a misunderstanding and emerge triumphant. It was no more his business to try to aid the afflicted cause of the Hanford Street Church than it had been to talk matters over with Brother Jordan some months earlier. He had helped Brother Jordan and the South Sterrett Street Church by a kindly office of love and good will, and by a safe counsel. And now he was anxious to do what he could to smooth the troubled waters elsewhere.

Brother Sutton could not be approached. He was much older than Peter. He had an extensive reputation. He had, as before stated, written two highly

successful books on religious subjects. He felt that he was experienced in life, and he felt that Peter was not experienced, and so he not only would not have sought the younger man's counsel, but had it been given he would have spurned it. Knowing this, what could Peter do, even though he was very anxious to help Brother Sutton and the Hanford Street Church?

Matters worked round to such a point and in such a way that he could help.

Josh Pettigrew was a comparatively new member of the Hanford Street Church. He had made such a favorable impression upon the officers of the congregation that he had lately been installed as a deacon, although comparatively new among them. They had not acted rashly. He was seasoned material, and that was readily gathered. And he was steady and consistent. That also gave him a different angle of vision upon the trouble that was agitating the congregation. He was neutral. He inherited none of the prejudices or prepossessions of the older members. His heart was torn over the predicament into which they had fallen, and from which, seemingly, they were unable to extricate themselves.

He and Peter by chance met at a downtown restaurant for lunch one day, and straightway fell into a conversation. The Hanford Street Church trouble came up.

"What will this thing result in, Brother Pettigrew?" Peter asked.

"That I cannot say. Almost anything can happen."

"What is your honest opinion about whether Brother Sutton should resign his work here in Andover and go to some new field for the healing of the breach?" Peter next asked.

"In my opinion that will have to be done to save

the church. But the trouble of it is that Brother Sutton feels like he is in the saddle, so to speak, and he thinks that he cannot be ousted. He may be right. His friends will likely stay by him until the last armed foe expires. That means disruption."

"It is a strangely consistent world," Peter observed aloud, and only half addressing Brother Pettigrew. "Now many moons ago Brother Sutton was found working against Brother Jordan as minister of the South Sterrett Street Church, and was instrumental in having him ousted. Now the tables are turned. He is facing a similar trouble. It does seem that one will reap what he sows."

"I too have watched the working of that truism of the Apostle Paul.

"What in your judgment will be the way to save the situation?" Josh Pettigrew asked.

"Can the opposition never be silenced?"

"Never, I think. They will see to the removal of Brother Sutton or else they will pull off in a body and split the church."

"Is there immediate danger of this?" Peter asked.

"There is pressing danger, but yet the thing has been troublesome ever since I came, and it may stand for some months yet," Josh Pettigrew answered. "Still the lid could blow off at any time. Do you have any suggestions?"

"I think I still have more questions to ask than I would have suggestions to make. Do you suppose you could draw all the officers into a meeting and let the question come up, and try by that means to impress upon Brother Sutton's mind that he will have to concede something?"

"We tried a meeting like that a little over a week ago and it ended in confusion without settling a single

point. And now the thing is worse than ever because of that meeting. Brother Sutton and his backers made it plain that they will concede nothing to the opposition," Josh Pettigrew said.

"My sympathies are with Brother Sutton, whether I can admire his stand in this matter or not," Peter said. "But in my judgment he will hurt himself and the cause in the long run and will be bound to lose whichever way this thing may terminate. If he could be a good loser now, and step out of the picture, he would prove himself a bigger man than his enemies think he is. And he may be about the size they judge him to be and stay on.

"Is there no way to convince him?"

"I am afraid not."

"Then the best thing in this world that could happen would be for Brother Sutton to get a call to some other place of labor. Do you suppose he would move if he could go to some other strong church?"

"Yes, I believe he would," Josh Pettigrew said.

"Well, I am going to try to get the elders of the Benton Avenue Church in Balmoreck, my old home town, to extend him an invitation to work with them. They recently lost their evangelist. And they are wanting a man. Of course, this kind of a thing would have to be worked out, and meantime the opposition might not wait. Do you suppose you could go to the opposition, being neutral as you are, and get them to agree to wait until he could make a satisfactory change if he would consider a change, or would go if he could go to a good place?"

"Yes, I believe I could; at least I could try. But can you get a strong consideration for him from this church in Balmoreck?"

"I think I can. And it so happens that Brother

Wilkes Barton is there now with that church in a great meeting. He can influence the situation in almost any direction that he wants to. I'll just take the liberty that Brother Sutton will be available, and then I'll explain it more fully to him in a letter. It would be a great thing to save the congregation here, and to save Brother Sutton's reputation from a serious impairment at this point in his life. He ought to have a number of good years of service in a new field, and we need him in the cause as we need every preacher in our midst.

"I'll call you after I talk with Brother Barton tonight," Peter promised on leaving Brother Pettigrew.

It seemed almost providential so happy was the the time of the thought as applied to the occasion. Wilkes Barton had a great influence. He put the thing across for Avery Sutton. He too was moved solely from righteous motives in a desire to help the cause of the Master. The thing worked out as outlined. Brother Josh Pettigrew held the opposition in check until Avery Sutton could get to the point of an agreement.

When Avery Sutton left Andover, bag and baggage, Peter and Josh Pettigrew, and numbers of others saw him off. Just before he entered the Pullman, in company with his wife and a married daughter, he pressed Peter's hand and told him that he knew the part he (Peter) had played in making possible the change. And he said:

"I'll always be grateful to you, Brother Finwick. When you first came to Andover I had some misgivings about whether you would succeed in view of the problems that you had to face, but I am glad to say that you have delightfully surprised me in manifesting a much larger ability than I believe the average

man among us has. I predict for you and the Pinehurst Street Church a great future. You have rendered me one of the greatest favors of my life, and I did not believe that you would ever be in position to bestow a favor, but I did suspect that you would may be come to me for favors in your problems. It turns out that you were the strong man and I was the weak man.

"It will be a pleasure for me to live in your home city and to see you when you come to visit your folk."

"My part in the matter was very insignificant," Peter modestly replied.

"It was the right touch at the right time."

CHAPTER XXVII.

David Welsh and Peter Finwick were talking over the troubles of the Western Parkway Church of Christ. Peter was not being asked to help solve the trouble, really, nor was he to have a part in the adjustment of the difficulty, but they were talking over the trouble David Welsh was having nevertheless. It was a casual meeting. Peter had gone down with some announcements to the paper office where David Welsh worked. They fell into a brief conversation.

"I hear you have Smythe Hawkins over with you these days, Brother Welsh."

'Yes, I am sorry to say we have. We did invite him, but only after he had made some to do about coming to worship with us. That started the works. He has been a trouble-maker ever since he came. I wish we had left him where he was.

"It seems to me that I heard you had him with you one time. Is that right?" Brother Welsh asked.

"Yes. But he did not tarry long. He found a solid organization that he could not upset. In fact, I don't believe that he has ever intentionally and deliberately been a trouble-maker, even if that is the reputation that he has. I believe that all he is wanting is to get into the lead somewhere. He is bound to be a bell-weather. And if he can become that I think he will be peaceable enough.

"If you fellows will just turn it over to him down there and get behind him and follow I think you will get along all right with him," Peter said, partially jokingly.

"I thought he had drawn off some of your mem-

bers and was meeting with them in his home. That was the impression that I had when I talked with him about coming to Western Parkway Church. I should have asked him more about that, but I had a feeling of delicacy and did not want to hurt his feelings. And since I have heard that he did that. Is it true?" Brother Welsh asked.

"Yes, he did that. We agreed in business meeting to act like we felt all right about the matter. I went to him and in an incidental sort of way smoothed the thing out, implying that we did not care. That was the best way to handle his rebellion with us, I have found out. I thought so all along. His friends left him one by one. Finally he was left almost alone. And it was then that he began to negotiate (I think that is the proper word) with you about meeting with you. He did that with me when he came from the transgressives. He is an odd piece of humanity."

"I wish we could work loose from him that way," Brother Welsh said.

"Anyway, I wish you luck," Peter said on leaving.

As Peter walked down the street the face of Smythe Hawkins came into his mind's eye.

"Any one ought to know that he is as stubborn as a mule. His jaw and chin show a domineering disposition. And his full forehead shows that same thing. There is a sort of squareness about his face. He wants to rule. He has the desire for leadership without the capacity and training for it. But if he lives he will lead. He leads his wife about by the nose now. And he intends to lead others. If he cannot lead one place, he will another. If he cannot lead one set of folks he will another. He will lead.

"Now he ought to go off into some obscure settlement of the city and find a bunch of good but ignorant people and start him something. That would be bet-

ter than to disturb other folks. He has broken into three different congregations now trying to find a place to lead, and he hasn't succeeded that way. He'll have to try something else."

The above soliloquy had nothing whatever to do with prognosticating what Smythe Hawkins would do, but it was so well based as an analysis that it was not many months later when he did that very thing. He went into an isolated section, found a few exceptionally tractable folks of the humbler class, and started a congregation. And he worked himself out. At first a full fledged digressive, and then an extreme anti, he finally settled into a happy medium, and had a preacher of some ability who was an insurance salesman to preach for his congregation (yes, his as much or more than it was the Lord's) about half the time. And they had Sunday school classes, and showed themselves finally a fairly well balanced folk. But Brother Settlers, the insurance salesman-preacher, either knew, or else never desired to cross Brother Smythe Hawkins. They worked together like two brothers in the flesh.

"What do you know about that?" Silas Jenkins asked Peter, one day when the latter was in his office and the conversation had turned to this very point.

"It is what I could have anticipated. In fact, I did think that if he could ever get something that he could boss that he would not be so radical. His radical and extreme views were all forced in his eager search for some handle, so to speak, to get hold of situations. I believed all the time that he did not care a rap about such questions as he brought up. He was seeking to get into the lead.

"And I am pretty sure that a lot of others are a lot like him. They want to be heard, and they don't know how unless they raise an objection. It is an

ambitious spirit seeking prominence when the brain is not filled with the genius to raise genuine issues. And that is why an ordinary intellect is found in the average trouble-maker," Peter observed.

"I have been thinking of something equally as interesting as that, but entirely of a different nature," Silas Jenkins said.

Peter waited. He knew his friend well. A little pause was in order. Then Silas Jenkins went on:

"It is the law of retribution. I don't know whether you believe in retribution upon this earth or not. And I cannot say that I do all the way through. I think there are some cases that would seem to be an exception, from all that I can learn about them. It may be that if I knew all I would find the retribution in every case. 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall be also reap.' This is good doctrine.

"Some months ago you remember what a time we had settling the rumpus that L. L. Bradshaw and Alan B. Whiteman stirred up? They tried to make a mess of things. And their motives may have been just such as were Smythe Hawkins'. I did not want to impugn their motives. But I always thought they smacked of a mild hypocrisy. They too wanted to run things. There is a lot of that spirit in the world.

"The Lord seems to be paying these fellows back. Not in kind. But he seems to be paying them back just the same. They say Brother Bradshaw has a bad case of cancer and cannot live but a few months longer."

"Awfully sorry to hear it."

"So am I," Brother Jenkins said. "Anyway I suppose he will now be giving himself to meditation and prayer instead of trouble making through a misguided sense of running the cause of Christ."

"He'll not repent much," Peter said. "He doesn't

realize what he has done to the Lord's cause in more than one instance. I have heard of some of his other escapades. He is one of the sort who never saw the beam in his own eye. He has been as self-righteous as a hypocrite. Not many folk have any faith in his religion. His family have none. Notwithstanding, he makes made very interesting prayers. I don't accuse him of being all bad. He has some righteousness in him. He has just been the kind who did not know himself. He has been like the church at Laodicea. It thought that it was rich, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. God said of it that it knew not that it was wretched and miserable, and poor and blind and naked. I know that the Scripture says, 'Who art thou that judgest another?' And yet it says, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' I have been guided by this Scripture and do not believe that I violate another. But I am just as sorry as I can be for him, and I'll go to see him right away," Peter concluded.

"Yes. I want you to go to see him. He deserves sympathy as much as he deserves censure. I pity all such mortals as he is."

"He was impossible of reform," Peter said, falling into a way of speaking of him as if he were all ready deceased.

"The other case is different, but bad also. Brother Whiteman has been having a succession of troubles. He got his new car torn all to pieces. A Negro lad ran into him with an old dilapidated wreck of a car. Of course, the Negro was worth nothing, and the new car Brother Whiteman was so proud of is ruined. And I understood that it was not paid for. Then on top of that his wife quit him and has gone to her mother's.

"It may be that the Lord didn't send any of these

things upon these two dissention workers. But why were they selected out of all the men I know to be visited with such troubles?"

"We might say that we just have not noticed the troubles of others as we have these, or do these," Peter said. "And then again one might ask, if this is a proof of earthly retribution, how does it happen that Smythe Hawkins has escaped the hand of the Lord?"

"True enough. But maybe he won't always. And maybe he has suffered some consequences of this thing."

"I have heard that he has had serious financial reverses," Peter said. "But I do not know about that."

"Anyway, the right, and straight course is the correct one," Brother Jenkins concluded, and there the matter rested.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The meeting which Evangelist Wilkes Barton conducted at the Pinehurst Street Church was a wonderful success. Visible results were large. There were two score baptisms and several added by transfers of membership and a few restored to duty. The meeting strengthened the church a great deal. And all added strength, plus the systematic, persistent campaign for a new church building with increased facilities which Peter laid down privately and succinctly publicly, made the future of the church more secure. It is strange how a building program for a congregation (when a larger building is really needed) helps the morale of a church. All seem to get the idea of the rapid strides of the congregation and to talk it with their neighbors and friends. It sets them to work like a hive of bees. Any increased activity will show this spirit. A great meeting. A building program. A Sunday school campaign.

Peter and Eloise were not married in the fall, nor yet in the spring. Her parents had begged that it be put off in view of their removal to Andover. They said that they wanted to get settled in their new home and have everything in readiness. Peter had to consent. Eloise felt that this concession would have to be made for policy's sake since he had gone so against her mother's will in other respects.

Since Eloise was their only child, Mrs. Corbyn wanted to have her and Peter live with them, but Mr. Corbyn said that he felt that it would be better for all concerned for the younger couple to have their own home. Of course, Peter felt the same way. He had always contended that it was inimical to peace and

good relations between inlaws for them to be mixed up too much. Some can do well that way. Some do not so well. And in this case there was absolutely no need to get things started off wrong.

Eloise meantime was going along with her university work. She was through her third year in university in the spring that Evangelist Wilkes Barton concluded his meeting with the Pinehurst Street Church in Andover. The meeting closed just before the closing of the school year. Her examinations were on and Eloise did not get to attend the meeting like she wanted to. She was anxious to finish and get her A. B. degree before he was married, and yet she wanted to be Peter's wife with such an intensity, and he wanted her with such an intensity that it did not seem possible that they could wait another year. They finally concluded that she would have to do that other year of university work while she went under the name of Mrs. Peter Finwick. And so the wedding date was set for the 14th of October, which was Eloise's twenty-first birthday.

The Pinehurst Street Church had a fine body of officers. Royal Davis, who had thought another preacher (Kenway Lee) would be better for the congregation, was a splendid fellow. When he came to know Peter he was heart and soul for him. And be became one of Peter's staunchest supporters. It was Royal Davis who proposed that the Pinehurst Street Church provide a house for its minister. He suggested that as soon as the new house could be built they move the old frame building on the back of the lot—the lot was one hundred and sixty-four feet deep, having been cut into that length by a former owner who had re-aligned his lots, and thus had left that church corner an odd depth—and convert it into a residence for the minister (servant) of the congre-

gation. This was readily agreed upon by the whole body of the officers once Royal Davis had mentioned it and Silas Jenkins had endorsed it.

"We'll have to move it before we build, Brother Davis, if we build on the same ground," Lucius Webb said. "You proposed that as soon as the new house is completed we move the old one on to the back of the lot."

"Now don't be facetious, Brother Webb," Clyde Bigelow said. "You'll have to take Brother Davis at what he means and not at what he says."

"At least my intentions are good, however out of line my words may be," Brother Davis said.

Anyway, the proposition was carried out. The old building was moved to the rear of the lot. There it served as a place to meet while the first unit of the new church building was being prepared. And this building was being built in units. First, there was an auditorium, with more class rooms than the old building afforded. This was Silas Jenkins' plan. He had insisted upon building the house in two parts. Then the congregation could finance it without such a strain at any time. And the final plans would be so much better, larger and convenient than the congregation could hope to have if it did not follow this plan. Brother Jenkins had explained that a church should grow in its facilities and finances like an individual.

"An individual starts out in life. He first buys himself an humble cottage in some average section. That is the best that he can do. Later he gets in more comfortable circumstances. Then his family increases and he needs more room. Also he is ambitious to do the best that he can for his family, and so he selects a larger house in a better section. Now we do not want to try to select another section. We have the right section. But we cannot reach a fair

objective in just one single bound. We must let our finances grow until we can manage what we want. By building a Sunday school building near the back of the lot at first, and leaving room out front for the main auditorium, we can work toward a good large house in the future. And we'll not have to overload ourselves with debt until the members will become discouraged. You know, if you overload a congregation, you will have to preach on money, talk money, think money, until it will injure your spirituality, if you are not careful.

"It seems to me that we ought to follow those points that have been demonstrated by some of our religious neighbors to be sound. That is the way they do. Take the Grace Memorial Church. That is the way they did. I have been in Andover a good many years. Now they have a magnificent structure there. But when I first came to town they had just a small frame building like we now have," Silas Jenkins argued. And he won his point.

All haste was made to have the new first unit of the church building up and the old one remodeled into a comfortable home by the fourteenth of October. As much as they wanted to have the home ready, the congregation could not do so. They were running about two weeks behind with it. Then at the last moment it was seen that even that would not discommode the plans of the young people, as they would want to have a honeymoon. Of course! When one looks on the bright side, he can usually readjust his vision to circumstances. It is only when he is out of humor with life in any one of its parts that a readjustment is almost impossible.

Mrs. Corbyn, settled in her new home in Andover for a little more than a month, was saddened a lot through the approaching marriage of her daughter.

And yet she had a sort of subdued happiness, even when she shed a few tears. Eloise seemed so happy.

"I'll be glad when you youngsters get married," Mr. Corbyn said to his daughter at dinner one evening just before the wedding.

"Why will you be glad, Daddy?"

"Because you try so hard to live together now, and it is such an inconvenience to the rest of the family. You have lost your appetite besides."

"Daddy is so unromantic, Mother. I wonder how it was with him before he was married."

"That has been so long that he has forgotten, my dear," Mrs. Corbyn commented.

"You are going to invite the whole congregation to your wedding, I suppose," Mr. Corbyn said, kidding on.

"It doesn't matter if I am marrying a preacher, I am not going to belong to the whole church in that special sense," Eloise replied.

"You know you are going to be amenable to everybody in two weeks' time. So you had just as well begin that way and invite them all. You ought to have a church wedding in the first place, but since you are not, I don't know where you are going to draw the line on the invitations."

"I would have a church wedding, but Peter will not consent to it. And while you are teasing me about it, it is a problem. I think that to get away from being accused of being partial we have about decided to elope to some other city and get married."

"You don't mean it," Mrs. Corbyn said.

"No, I don't mean it. But it would makes things easier in some respects," Eloise said.

"You'll just have to be partial for this one time.

and invite a very few of the special friends of yours and Peter's in the church, and a few outside," Mrs. Corbyn said. "You are going to have to face the problem of partiality a lot in the future as a preacher's wife and you had just as well to begin to meet it with firmness now."

"That's very good counsel, Mrs. Corbyn," Mr. Corbyn said solemnly.

Mrs. Corbyn hardly knew, as well as she knew her husband, whether he was ironical or not. Anyway the conversation ended there. And things were worked out as Mrs. Corbyn suggested.

The wedding was a lovely affair. The romantic eyes of Peter and his bride could not have seen it otherwise.

And this story comes to an end with Peter Finwick and his bride embarking upon their honeymoon.

FINIS.

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